# CHARLES LAMB AND THE LLOYDS

H

Walker & Boutall, ph. sc.

*Charles Lamb*

*Aged 30*

*By William Hazlitt*

*from a picture in the National Portrait Gallery.*

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# CHARLES LAMB & THE LLOYDS

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COMPRISING NEWLY-DISCOVERED LETTERS OF CHARLES LAMB, SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE, THE LLOYDS, ETC.

EDITED BY E. V. LUCAS

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WITH PORTRAITS

J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY
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# PREFACE

THIS book grew from the discovery, in 1894, of two masses of correspondence relating to the family of Charles Lloyd (1748–1828), the Quaker philanthropist and banker of Birmingham. The papers, which are very numerous, contain upwards of twenty new letters of Charles Lamb, some of them worthy to rank with his best, and others, also hitherto unpublished, of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, William Wordsworth, Thomas Manning, Robert Southey, Thomas Clarkson, Anna Seward, Catherine Hutton, Priscilla Lloyd (1781–1815), who married Christopher Wordsworth, Charles Lloyd the poet (1775–1839), Robert Lloyd his brother (1778–1811), and Mr. Lloyd himself. With the aid of these letters, and information contained in volumes bearing upon the period, it has been possible to tell, at any rate in outline, the story of a notable family.

The Lloyds with whom we have intercourse in these documents, though they were not of remarkable intellectual achievement, possessed very fully that gift of interest for which so many Quakers have been conspicuous. All, in one way or another, were interesting. Mr. Lloyd, the father, had much of Mr. Gladstone's mental vigour and variousness. Publicly he was concerned in large schemes of benevolence; in private he played the scholar to such purpose as to draw praise from that very honest critic, Charles Lamb. Mr. Lloyd's eldest son, Charles, also interested Lamb, lived for a while with Coleridge, and later in life was the friend of "Christopher North," De Quincey, and Macready; while Robert Lloyd, another son, completely won Lamb's sympathies and engaged him in a correspondence which leaves literature the richer.

Whether any more Lamb letters are forthcoming is a question for the future to answer. The fact that those printed in this volume lay hidden for more than eighty years is indication

enough that others still may exist, awaiting the moment appointed by fate for their discovery. In Canon Ainger's edition of Lamb's "Letters," for example, Elia's epistolary activity in 1798 is represented by but eight letters, and in 1799 by the same number; whereas it is reasonable to assume that in those years he wrote to one friend or another at least once a week. It should be added that in the twenty-three new letters of Lamb which follow occasional modifications of punctuation have been made.

The three Coleridge letters were written while Charles Lloyd was domesticated with Coleridge as pupil in 1796. They belong to a period when the philosopher was casting about for some definite plan of campaign, and help sensibly towards completing our portrait of that noticeable man. Later, in correspondence passing between the Lloyds, are certain acute observations on the great mind.

Among the books which have been found most useful in corroborating and fortifying the information contained in these papers must be

mentioned Canon Ainger's edition of Lamb's "Letters," Mr. Ernest Hartley Coleridge's edition of Coleridge's "Letters," the late Mr. Dykes Campbell's edition of Coleridge's "Poems," De Quincey's "Autobiography," the "Dictionary of National Biography," Mrs. Sandford's "Thomas Poole and His Friends," and the late Bishop Charles Wordsworth's "Annals of my Early Life."

At the time of the discovery of the MSS. a description of a portion of them was printed in the "Birmingham Daily Post" (for February 4, 1895); a few weeks later an account of certain others was contributed to the "Athenæum" (for March 2, 1895), by Dr. James Gow; and two articles telling the story of the friendship of Charles Lamb and Robert Lloyd, and giving certain extracts from their letters, appeared in the "Cornhill" and in "Lippincott's" for May and June of the present year. But the documents that follow are now for the first time made public in their entirety.

The Coleridge letters are here printed by

arrangement with the poet's grandson, Mr Ernest Hartley Coleridge, and other letters by permission of Canon Manning, Mr. Gordon Wordsworth, and other representatives of the writers. For the portraits of Charles Lloyd and Sophia Lloyd, now for the first time reproduced, I am indebted to the courtesy of Mr. C. A. Lloyd. They were painted by Constable, who visited Birmingham as the guest of James Lloyd, another son of Bingley Hall, early in the century. Thanks are also due, for information and help, to Mr. and Mrs. F. H. Steeds, Mr. Henry Crewdson, and Mr. Charles Linnell; and, for his kindness in reading the proofs and advising thereon, to Mr. W. P. Ker.

E. V. L.

LONDON: *October* 1898

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# CHARLES LAMB AND THE LLOYDS

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## I

### THE LLOYDS

The Lloyds, an old and honourable Welsh family, were seated for many generations at Dolobran, in Montgomery. The present members, who are of unusual numerical strength, trace their descent both to the Kings of Dyfed and—through the marriage of Charles Lloyd of Dolobran (1637–1698) with Elizabeth Lort—to Edward I.

This Charles Lloyd and his brother Thomas were the first Quakers in the family. Like so many of the warriors for spiritual liberty gathered under George Fox's bloodless flag, they did not escape suffering and persecution. Charles Lloyd, indeed, had a full share, for in 1662 he was thrown into prison at Welshpool for refus-

ing to take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, and not for ten years was he at large again. Thither his wife accompanied him, and it was under these distressing conditions that their eldest son Charles was born. Although still an offender, Charles Lloyd was allowed by his judge, Lord Herbert, to leave the prison and remain under inspection and restraint in a house at Welshpool, where his second son, Sampson Lloyd, was born in 1664. Eight years later, on the pronouncement of the royal Declaration of Indulgence, Charles Lloyd was again able to return to Dolobran. His spirit was in no respect broken, and his after life, which did not terminate until 1698, was zealous for the brave little sect he had joined.

His first son, Charles Lloyd (1662–1747), who succeeded him at Dolobran, greatly improved the estate, and set up furnaces for the forging of charcoal iron; while the second son, Sampson Lloyd (1664–1724), moved to Birmingham, where he opened an iron warehouse in connection with this new industry, and was able without molestation—for Birmingham was friendly to Nonconformists—to pursue his way as a follower of George Fox.

Sampson Lloyd was married twice: first, in 1685, to Elizabeth Good, and secondly, in 1695, to Mary Crowley. By the second wife he had two daughters and four sons, one of whom was Sampson Lloyd, of Birmingham and Farm (1699–1779), ironmaster, and the founder of Lloyds Bank.

This Sampson Lloyd also married twice. He wedded first with Sarah Parks, of Birmingham, a union from which sprang Sampson Lloyd (1728–1807), and through him the Lloyds of Farm, of whom the history may be read in the little record called "Farm and its Inhabitants," privately printed for the family in 1883.[1] From Sampson Lloyd's second mar-

[1] It was this Sampson Lloyd whom Dr. Johnson, who disliked Quakers as a sect, but could be attracted by them individually, visited, with Boswell, in 1776: "We next," Boswell wrote, "called on Mr. Lloyd, one of the people called Quakers. He too was not at home, but Mrs. Lloyd was, and received us courteously, and asked us to dinner. Johnson said to me, 'After the uncertainty of all human things at Hector's, this invitation came very well.'" At dinner, Mr. Lloyd having returned, the Doctor, addressing his host and hostess (who had many children), remarked: "Marriage is the best state for a man in general; and every man is a worse man in proportion as he is unfit for the married state." Subsequently both the Doctor and Mr. Lloyd were lured into error during a discussion on Baptism. The only other remark of the great man recorded by Boswell was this: "The Church does not superstitiously observe days, merely as days,

riage—with Rachel Champion, of Bristol—came the family with which this book is concerned, Charles Lloyd, of Bingley, who succeeded to the bank, being the fourth son.

Charles Lloyd, of Bingley, was born August 23, 1748. He was educated with the thoroughness common at that time to the children of wealthy Quakers; and being gifted with a memory of singular power, he learned much. Although, in accordance with his father's principles, a period at a university could not round off his boyhood, Charles Lloyd must have entered business with a larger store of classical knowledge than many masters of arts can boast.

He married, in 1774, Mary Farmer, who also was of the Friends, and they had, like most Lloyds, a very large family,[1] of whom

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but as memorials of important facts. Christmas might be kept as well upon one day of the year as another; but there should be a stated day for commemorating the birth of our Saviour, because there is danger that what may be done on any day, will be neglected." Dr. Johnson, it should be noted, was in his youth in love with a Quakeress named Olivia Lloyd (possibly his host's aunt of that name), to whom he wrote a copy of amatory verses, which do not, however, exist.

[1] Yet as to its precise dimensions opinions differ. In "Farm and its Inhabitants" the number is given as 12; Bishop Wordsworth, of St. Andrews, a grandson of Mr. Lloyd, says 15; and De Quincey, 17

Charles Lloyd, born in 1775, the friend of Coleridge and Lamb, was the first, and Robert, born in 1778, Lamb's correspondent in the following pages, the third.

Mrs. Lloyd, who lived until 1821, was a woman of great sweetness of character—" the kindest and tenderest mother," wrote her eldest son after her death. " She was humble," he added in the same memoir, " even to profound self-abasedness: disinterested even to nobility of soul: and self-denying, and devout, to a degree which those who give the preference to the *active* over the *passive* virtues, would call ascetic and mystical: but with all this rigidity and austerity as respected herself, she was of all human beings, and in many striking instances she evinced this, the most disposed to extenuate the failings of the inconsistent, to check the despair of the culpable, and to wipe the tear of shame and penitence from the cheek of the victim to 'the Sin which most easily besetteth him.' This, as many can testify, is not panegyric, but plain and unvarnished truth." And

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or 18. Foster's " Royal Lineage" enumerates 14, three dying in infancy.

in a poem inspired by the death of his mother, Charles Lloyd also wrote of her charity of mind and purse:

> In thee it was
> A fresh, gratuitous, and healthful spring,
> Like that of living waters.

And again:

> In that warm bosom there did dwell enshrined
> A human microcosm, which reflected
> All the mind's accidents.

Mr. Lloyd,—as hereafter, for the sake of distinction, her husband may be called,—was of extraordinary intellectual vigour. He contrived, while neglecting neither his business, which prospered continuously under his care, nor his family, to concern himself intimately in public affairs, both of Birmingham and the country. The following passage from an excellent account of Mr. Lloyd in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, March, 1828, is illuminative:

> In the pursuit of any object of his attention, he suffered no other to interfere with or distract it, and he possessed the power of turning, after laborious investigations, with surprising freshness to occupations requiring intellectual exertions of a different nature. Few men,

perhaps, so rich in resources, had them so much at command. He embraced with promptness, and zealously prosecuted, whatever appeared to his comprehensive mind conducive to the benefit of his species, or the happiness of those connected with him. He was an unwearied and able member of that body of Philanthropists, to whose persevering efforts Great Britain is indebted for the removal of that foulest stain upon her annals—the Slave Trade. Nor have his efforts ever slackened to aid the plans proposed for the amelioration of the condition of the Negro population of our dominions in the West Indies; and although he wished for the trial of more moderate measures than those proposed by many of the advocates for emancipation, yet he generally concurred in the principles advocated in Parliament by his nephew, Mr. Buxton [afterwards Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton, (1786–1845)], and he always took the lead on public occasions when this subject was brought forward in Birmingham. A lover of peace and an admirer of the constitution of his country, he deprecated, in common with all the friends of humanity, the unwise measures which the ministry of Lord North in 1775 were contemplating for stifling opposition to its will in the North American colonies. When all negotiation seemed fruitless, and the overbearing conduct of the Minister had determined Dr. Franklin to depart; when the horrors of civil war and the disunion of the Empire seemed inevitable; Mr. Lloyd and his brother-in-law, Mr. David Barclay, did not consider affairs so irretrievable as not to warrant another attempt at reconciliation. After much persuasion and entreaty, Dr. Franklin yielded, and he told his

friends that, though he considered the attempt hopeless, yet he could not resist the desire he felt, in common with them, to preserve peace. Some minor concessions were made by the Colonies at the suggestions of these gentlemen. Lord North, as is known, was inexorable, and the Envoy returned from the conference, the last which a representative from that country had with an English cabinet, until she sent her plenipotentiary to treat as a Sovereign Republic.

Mr. Lloyd was also a leading figure in the Bible Society, and to his expenditure of money and effort the Birmingham General Hospital owes the beginnings of its large usefulness.

To quote again from the same biographical notice: "What minds less energetic would have deemed studies of no trifling nature, were allotted for the occupation of those hours which he considered set apart for relaxation. His acquaintance with ancient and modern history was accurate and extensive, and he read in several European languages their works of note. Few men were better versed in the Holy Scriptures, or more complete masters of their contents. He could repeat from memory several entire Books of the Old Testament and the greatest part of the New, and was well versed in theological learning. But next to

the Scriptures, the classics were his favourite study. When past sixty he commenced a translation of Homer, and executed a faithful and agreeable version of the whole of the 'Odyssey' and great part of the 'Iliad.'" Mr. Lloyd also turned his attention to Horace, translating several of the Epistles into easy verse; but to these pleasant tasks we shall refer again. "Virgil," the writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine* continued, "was very familiar to him; his extraordinary memory retained to the close of his life the whole of the 'Georgics' and 'Bucolics.' The agreeable picture of farming so beautifully portrayed in those inimitable descriptions of pastoral life, induced Mr. Lloyd to take one of his estates into his own hands, and for thirty years he farmed under his own inspection nearly two hundred acres. [This was at Olton Green, of which more later.] One day in the week was at least devoted to this pursuit, and the relaxation which this interesting employment yielded him, contributed, in conjunction with temperance and cheerfulness, to keep a naturally delicate constitution in health and vigour to a late period of his life."

We have glimpses of Mr. Lloyd's domestic thoroughness, his capacity for keeping in touch with every member of his household, in his letters to his sons at school, a few of which have been preserved. Here are typical extracts from one addressed to Robert, Thomas, and Plumstead Lloyd, in 1792:

"I have sent you some paper, a spade, pencils, and painting brushes, and a 'Virgil' and 'Selecta,' &c., all which you will, I hope, make a good use of. . . . I observe your request for fishing rods, but I do not wish you to be too frequent in using them, for it is cruel to the poor worms, who are put to great torture. I have not sent any rods, thinking if your Master approves of your fishing now and then, that long Osier twigs will do as well as any rods. As you have already plenty of books, I would have you be diligent in reading them, for a few books well chosen and frequently read are much better than a great number ill-chosen. . . . Tho' you are very young, yet you are old enough to know and consider that life is very uncertain, and the Youth as well as the Old are often summoned to the Silent Grave; but these reflections, my dear Boys, have no occasion to

make you sorrowful, for if we do what is right, Death can never come at an unsuitable time."

In another letter we find him dealing with matters usually left to the mother's care: "I think the breeches Robert had on at Warwick were very good ones, but if he wants another pair, let the Shipston Tailor make them; but be sure, mind, that he makes them long enough." This sufficiently proves Mr. Lloyd's vigilance as a father. From his thoughtful plans for his children's pleasure we learn that he was more than merely vigilant: he possessed the kindly faculty—which may be imaginative sympathy, and may be recollection of one's own childish days—that controls the choice of presents and ensures their congeniality. Mrs. Lloyd, once sending to Robert the latest news (and a cake) said: "Priscilla concludes to omit writing, so I may inform you of the arrival of the Squirrels, who came in their large House, plac'd upon a Waggon drawn by Six Horses, to the no small surprise and amusement of the spectators. We were a little puzzled where to fix them, but they were, after *due deliberation*, plac'd below the Terrace, where they seem to enjoy good health and an excellent appetite. I forget whether

your Papa had brought a little open Carriage for Caroline and Agatha before you went—the little girls are much amused with drawing it about the Garden."

In Mr. Lloyd, in short, all the self-control, the sagacity, the dignity, the kindly benevolence, the even temperament, of the old-time Quaker were carried out to their fullest power.

## II

### COLERIDGE AND CHARLES LLOYD
### 1796–1797

Charles Lloyd, born in 1775, the eldest of the family, was a contemplative, self-conscious, sensitive youth, continuously afflicted with nervous weakness. He had much of the Lake poets' delight in scenery; he was a profoundly interested inquirer into ethical questions; he would examine an emotion with almost more assiduity than his master Rousseau himself; and quite early he ceased to subscribe to the teaching of Friends. Quaker families now and then produce such exotics.

On leaving school early in the nineties, he followed the natural course of an eldest son and entered his father's business. For a while the work there was congenial, but in 1794 his health gave way, and he descended from the high stool, never to return to it. On recovering, he proceeded to Edinburgh with some idea of studying medicine. Edinburgh, however,

held him but a brief space, and we find him next, in 1795, living with Wordsworth's friend, Thomas Wilkinson—Wilkinson of the spade —at Yanwath. It was there that Lloyd produced his first volume of poems. "He has a poetical turn," wrote Wilkinson of his young friend, "and writes most beautiful verse. His attachment is to a pastoral life, as most natural and consistent with his own feelings. He would prefer life in the country with 100*l.* a year to 1,000*l.* in the town."

Most introspective men, however confident and light-hearted they may afterwards become, are serious in the late teens. Letters from Charles Lloyd to his brother Robert, then apprentice at Saffron Walden, show him to have been doubly so. In 1794, the writer being then nineteen and Robert sixteen, Robert was thus adjured: "Do not give way to useless speculation. I advise you particularly to read Rousseau's 'Emilius,' in French if you can, and pray, out of regard to *Charles*, who now *earnestly entreats*, pay particular attention to the Savoyard vicar's confessions of faith, in the 2nd or 3rd vol. Get that book at all events. Do not attend to the intricacies of sectarian

peculiarities; be a good man, retain a pure heart, but oh! avoid alike the Quaker and the Libertine, the Methodist and the Atheist."

In another letter, dated November 29, 1795, thirteen months later, a more miscellaneous course of reading was prescribed for the Saffron Walden apprentice. Charles began thus: "I am convinced that nothing tends so much to narrow the mind as sectarian and confin'd notions of religion and morality. The pure ardour of universal benevolence does not abate at the sight of a Lutheran or a Quaker, a Catholic or an Unbeliever. No! it considers all the petty, paltry distinctions of parties and sects, which would separate man from man and brother from brother, as originating in the weaknesses and prejudices of mankind; it despises them all, and simply seeks by active usefulness, not by unintelligible dogmas, to diffuse good and enlarge the confin'd limit of human felicity." The following volumes were then recommended: Holcroft's "Anna St. Ives," Godwin's "Political Justice," Priestley's "Letters to a Philosophical Unbeliever" and "History of Christianity" (this might be either the "History of the Corruptions of Christianity," or "A

General History of the Christian Church," of which only the first two volumes were then in existence), Paley's "Evidence," Lindsey's "Apology" (for Unitarianism), and "Conversations" on the same subject. "When you have read these, all of which I am convinc'd it will be to your advantage to peruse, I shall then gladly point out other works." Finally came the advice to read Volney's "Ruins of Empire," but "with caution."

Is it matter for surprise that the writer of these letters became the enthusiastic disciple of Coleridge, when that prophet, glowing with youth and belief in the power and lustre of his projected "Watchman," visited Birmingham early in 1796?

One eloquent man is more, to young inquirers, than all the books in the Bodleian, and Charles Lloyd had been waiting for years to meet with such a mind as Coleridge's—glowing and confident, tireless and persuasive—and he fell completely under the spell. A few months later Coleridge again stopped in Birmingham, on his return from Derby, where a school was in preparation for him, and the adoration of the young visionary (younger

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.

AGED 23.

BY PETER VANDYKE.

*From a picture in the National Portrait Gallery.*

than Coleridge by two years) intensified. Charles Lloyd was then again living at home, building castles in the air which bore as little resemblance as might be to the family bank; for, as Joseph Cottle wrote in his "Early Recollections," "the tedious and unintellectual occupation of adjusting pounds, shillings and pence" suits those alone who have never, "eagle-like, gazed at the sun or bathed their temples in the dews of Parnassus."

Charles Lloyd desired with all his soul to lead the exalted existence of a philosopher and poet; and already having written a number of sonnets of a meditative and melancholy cast, forsworn the paternal creed, and passed through a stage of acute Rousseauism, he was perhaps entitled to his dream. The first step to the consummation of this ambition was domestication with Coleridge as pupil and friend; and Coleridge, when the plan was suggested to him, seems to have been agreeable. It was, of course, a flattering proposal, likely to please any man, particularly a "Pantisocratist" of twenty-three. He even addressed to Charles Lloyd a poem describing some of the delights of their projected companionship:

Together thus, the world's vain turmoil left,
Stretch'd on the crag, and shadow'd by the pine,
And bending o'er the clear delicious fount,
Ah! dearest youth! it were a lot divine
To cheat our noons in moralising mood,
While west-winds fann'd our temples toil-bedew'd:
Then downwards slope, oft pausing, from the mount,
To some lone mansion, in some woody dale,
Where smiling with blue eye, Domestic Bliss
Gives *this* the Husband's, *that* the Brother's kiss!

And thus:—

We'll smile at wealth, and learn to smile at fame,
Our hopes, our knowledge, and our joys the same,
As neighbouring fountains image each the whole:
Then when the mind hath drunk its fill of truth
We'll discipline the heart to pure delight,
Rekindling sober joy's domestic flame.
They whom I love shall love thee, honour'd youth!
Now may Heaven realise this vision bright!

And among Lloyd's poems, in the joint volume by himself, Coleridge and Lamb (1797), is an address to Coleridge, ending

My Coleridge! take the wanderer to thy breast,
The youth who loves thee, and who, faint, would rest
(Oft rack'd by hopes that frenzy and expire)
In the long sabbath of subdued desire!

which we may suppose to have been written at the same period.

In default of banking, for which there can be no doubt Charles Lloyd was peculiarly unfitted, Mr. Lloyd still thought of the medical profession for his son. But there was no call for haste; and when Charles mentioned his wish to join Coleridge, it was favourably entertained. After further consideration of the project, Mr. Lloyd invited Coleridge to pay another visit to Birmingham for the purpose of conference, and in September, 1796, Coleridge did so. While at the Lloyds' house he was surprised by an announcement that on the previous day, September 19, he had become the father of a son. Straightway he hastened home; and with him went Charles Lloyd, who thus enjoyed the privilege of being one of the first persons to welcome David Hartley Coleridge into this world. More: there is good reason to suppose, although another Charles—Charles Lamb—is also a candidate for the honour, that it was Charles Lloyd to whom the father addressed the sonnet inscribed "To a Friend who asked, How I felt when the nurse first presented my infant to me;" which begins

> Charles! my slow heart was only sad, when first
> I scann'd that face of feeble infancy;

and ends thus charmingly:—

> So for the Mother's sake the Child was dear,
> And dearer was the Mother for the Child.

To reach Coleridge's house when so important an event was happening was to begin the companionship auspiciously, and Charles Lloyd was forthwith at home. "My mother," wrote Sara Coleridge in her notes to the "Biographia Literaria," "has often told me how amiable Mr. Lloyd was as a youth; how kind to her little Hartley; how well content with cottage accommodation; how painfully sensitive in all that related to the affections." Coleridge seems to have been genuinely attracted by his pupil. On September 24 we find him writing to his friend Thomas Poole: "Charles Lloyd wins upon me hourly; his heart is uncommonly pure, his affections delicate, and his benevolence enlivened but not sicklied by sensibility. He is assuredly a man of great genius; but it must be in *tête-à-tête* with one whom he loves and esteems that his colloquial powers

open. . . . I shall write on the other side of the paper two of Charles Lloyd's sonnets, which he wrote in one evening at Birmingham. The latter of them alludes to the conviction of the truth of Christianity, which he had received from me, for he had been, if not a deist, yet quite a sceptic." Thus favourably the experiment began.

Mr. Lloyd, writing to Robert a few days later, informed him of the news in these words:—"Charles is gone to Bristol with intention of pursuing his studies under the care of S. T. Coleridge, a very sensible, religious man and an extraordinary poet, who was educated for a clergyman, but for conscience sake declined that office. Thou mayst order Coleridge's 'Poems' of the bookseller at S. Walden (a small octavo) and charge them to my account."

The original arrangement was that Charles was to pay 80*l.* a year in return for board, lodging, instruction, and the companionship of his friend and mentor. At first it was supposed that the household would be located at Derby, where Coleridge, at the instigation of Dr. Crompton, had undertaken to open a

school. But the following tremendous—almost Micawberesque—letter from Coleridge to Mr. Lloyd indicated a change of plans:—

"Dear Sir,—As the father of Charles Lloyd you are of course in some measure interested in any alteration of my schemes of life; and I feel it a kind of Duty to give you my reasons for any such alteration. I have declined my Derby connection, and determined to retire once for all and utterly from cities and towns: and am about to take a cottage and half a dozen acres of land in an enchanting Situation about eight miles from Bridgewater. My reasons are—that I have cause to believe my Health would be materially impaired by residing in a town, and by the close confinement and anxieties incident to the education of children; that as my days would be dedicated to Dr. Crompton's children, and my evenings to a course of study with my admirable young friend, I should have scarcely a snatch of time for literary occupation; and, above all, because I am anxious that my children should be bred up from earliest infancy in the simplicity of peasants, their food, dress, and habits completely rustic. I never shall, and I never will,

have any fortune to leave them: I will leave them therefore hearts that desire little, heads that know how little is to be desired, and hands and arms accustomed to earn that little. I am peculiarly delighted with the 21st verse of the 4th chapter of Tobit, 'And fear not, my son! that we are made poor: for thou hast much wealth, if thou fear God, and depart from all sin and do that which is pleasing in His sight.' Indeed, if I live in cities, my children (if it please the All-good to preserve the one I have, and to give me more), my children, I say, will necessarily become acquainted with politicians and politics—a set of men and a kind of study which I deem highly unfavourable to all Christian graces. I have myself erred greatly in this respect; but, I trust, I have now seen my error. I have accordingly snapped my squeaking baby-trumpet of sedition, and have hung up its fragments in the chamber of Penitences.[1]

"Your son and I are happy in our con-

[1] Coleridge was so taken with this trope that he repeated it in a letter to George Coleridge some eighteen months after ("Letters," I., p. 243):—"But I have snapped my squeaking baby-trumpet of sedition, and the fragments lie scattered in the lumber-room of penitence."

nection—our opinions and feelings are as nearly alike as we can expect: and I rely upon the goodness of the All-good that we shall proceed to make each other better and wiser. Charles Lloyd is greatly averse from the common run of society—and so am I—but in a city I could scarcely avoid it. And this, too, has aided my decision in favour of my rustic scheme. We shall reside near a very dear friend of mine, a man versed from childhood in the toils of the Garden and the Field, and from whom I shall receive every addition to my comfort which an earthly friend and adviser can give.

"My Wife requests to be remembered to you, if the word 'remember' can be properly used. You will mention my respects to your Wife and your children, and believe that I am with no mean esteem and regard

"Your Friend,

"S. T. Coleridge.

"Saturday, 15th Oct., 1796."

Coleridge, who at this time, it is instructive to note, was not quite twenty-four, wrote from Kingsdown, Bristol, where he then lived. The

cottage glanced at was Nether Stowey, and the friend was Thomas Poole, who dwelt in that village.

Although the suggestion of this letter is that Coleridge meant to give much time to Charles Lloyd, it is impossible to believe that under any conditions he would have been a satisfactory "coach." Especially at that period was he unfit for such drudgery: his brain was busy with a thousand projects; he was unsettled; he was poor; the arrival of David Hartley Coleridge had disorganised the house; and by constitution he detested the regular habits which a good instructor must observe. But we may suppose that the two men had continuous, if unsystematic, intercourse. Lloyd, whose mind was always acute, was even able now and then to help his master: "It is strange," wrote Coleridge to Poole, "that in the *sonnet to Schiller* I should have written, 'that hour I would have wished to *die*—Lest aught more mean might stamp me *mortal;*' the bull never struck me until Charles Lloyd mentioned it."

By Coleridge's conversation, on the other hand, Lloyd was stimulated—though stimula-

tion of this kind was at that period ever present with him—to write more poetry. While at Bristol he prepared a handsome folio in memory of his grandmother, entitled "Poems on the Death of Priscilla Farmer," for which Coleridge wrote the introductory sonnet, beginning

> The piteous sobs that choke the virgin's breath,

and to which Charles Lamb contributed "The Grandam." "The following beautiful fragment," wrote Lloyd, by way of introduction to it, "was written by Charles Lamb, of the India House. Its subject being the same with that of my Poems, I was solicitous to have it printed with them: and I am indebted to a Friend of the Author's for the permission." "I can but notice," Lamb wrote, on receiving a copy of the book, "the odd coincidence of two young men, in one age, carolling their grandmothers." And again, referring to the splendour of the volume, "I cannot but smile to see my granny so gaily decked forth." Lloyd's sonnets were marked by very strong affection, but otherwise were not conspicuous.

The date of Lamb's first letter to Charles

Lloyd cannot be given, but the first mention of Lloyd's name in Lamb's letters to Coleridge occurs on October 24, 1796. "My kind remembrances to Lloyd," he wrote; and henceforward, for some months, the three men had common interests.

Another poem written at this time by Coleridge, for his young friend's benefit, was the remonstrance entitled "Lines addressed to a young man of fortune who abandoned himself to an indolent and causeless melancholy," in which Lloyd was adjured to cease self-pity, and, rather, to

Seek some *widow's* grave; whose dearer part
Was slaughter'd, where o'er his uncoffined limbs
The flocking flesh-birds scream'd! Then, while thy heart
Groans, and thine eye a fiercer sorrow dims,
Know (and the truth shall kindle thy young mind)
What Nature makes thee mourn, she bids thee heal![1]

The attack of melancholy that was meant may have been the precursor of the illness which

[1] Mr. E. H. Coleridge suggests that possibly this stern admonition was first levelled by Coleridge against himself and afterwards transferred to Lloyd.

prostrated Lloyd in November, 1796. The following letter from Coleridge to Mr. Lloyd, in answer to one that is missing, tells the story. It also tells much that is interesting of Coleridge's own programme at that period :—

"DEAR SIR,—I received your letter, and thank you for that interest which you take in my welfare. The reasons which you urge against my present plan are mostly well-founded; but they would apply equally against any other scheme of life which *my* Conscience would permit me to adopt. I might have a situation as a Unitarian minister, I might have lucrative offices as an active Politician; but on both of these the Voice within puts a firm and unwavering negative. Nothing remains for me but schoolmastership in a large town or my present plan. To the success of both, and indeed even to my *subsisting* in either, health and the possession of my faculties are necessary Requisites. While I possess these Requisites, *I know*, I can maintain myself and family in the COUNTRY; the task of educating children suits not the activity of my mind, and the anxieties and confinement incident to it, added

to the living in a town or city, would to a moral certainty ruin that Health and those faculties which, as I said before, are necessary to my gaining my livelihood in *any* way. Undoubtedly, without fortune, or trade, or profession it is *impossible* that I should be in any situation in which I must not be dependent on my own health and exertions for the bread of my family. I do not regret it—it will make me *feel* my dependence on the Almighty, and it will prevent my affections from being made earthly altogether. I praise God in all things, and feel that to His grace alone it is owing that I am *enabled* to praise Him in all things. You think my scheme *monastic rather than Christian.* Can he be deemed monastic who is married, and employed in rearing his children?—who *personally* preaches the truth to his friends and neighbours, and who endeavours to instruct tho' Absent by the Press? In what line of Life could I be more *actively* employed? and what titles, that are dear and venerable, are there which I shall not possess, God permit my present resolutions to be realised? Shall I not be an Agriculturist, an Husband, a Father, and a *Priest* after the order of *Peace?* an *hireless*

Priest? 'Christianity teaches us to let our lights shine before men.' It does so—but it likewise bids us say, Our Father, lead us not [into] temptation! which how can he say with a safe conscience who voluntarily places himself in those circumstances in which, if he believe Christ, he must acknowledge that it would be easier for a Camel to go thro' the eye of a needle than for HIM to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven? Does not that man *mock* God who daily prays against temptations, yet daily places himself in the midst of the most formidable? I meant to have written a few lines only respecting myself, because I have much and weighty matter to write concerning my friend, Charles Lloyd; but I have been seduced into many words from the importance of the general truths on which I build my conduct.

"While your Son remains with me, he will, of course, be acquiring that knowledge and those powers of Intellect which are necessary as the *foundation* of excellence in all professions, rather than the immediate science of *any*. *Languages* will engross one or two hours in every day: the *elements* of Chemistry, Geome-

try, Mechanics, and Optics the remaining hours of study. After tolerable proficiency in these, we shall proceed to the study of *Man* and of *Men*—I mean, Metaphysics and History—and finally, to a thorough examination of the Jewish and Christian Dispensations, their doctrines and evidences: an examination necessary for all men, but peculiarly so to your son, if he be destined for a medical man. A Physician who should be even a Theist, still more a *Christian*, would be a rarity indeed. I do not know *one*—and I know a *great many* Physicians. They are *shallow* Animals: having always employed their minds about Body and Gut, they imagine that in the whole system of things there is nothing but Gut and Body."

[Here followed an account of Charles Lloyd's health, which was just then, said Coleridge, so "unsatisfactory" as to shut out anything but amusement. In his anxiety, Coleridge called in Dr. Beddoes, the father of Thomas Lovell Beddoes, the poet, and a man of eminence in his profession: "I chose Dr. Beddoes," Coleridge explained, "because he is a *philosopher*, and the knowledge of *mind* is essentially requisite in order to the well-treating

of your Son's distemper." After quoting Dr. Beddoes's remarks Coleridge continued: "Such is Dr. Beddoes's *written* opinion. But he *told* me, that your Son's cure must be effected by Sympathy and Calmness—by being in company with some one before whom he *thought aloud* on all subjects, and by being in situations perfectly according with the tenderness of his Disposition." Other remarks concerning diet and such matters followed, and the letter closed thus]:—

"I hope your Health is confirmed, and that your Wife and children are well. Present my well-wishes. You are blessed with children who are *pure in Heart*—add to this Health, Competence, Social Affections, and Employment, and you have a complete idea of Human Happiness.

"Believe me,

"With esteem and friendly-heartedness,

"Your obliged

"S. T. Coleridge.

"Monday, November 14th [1796]."

It is not surprising, with Charles Lloyd in such a state and his own movements so im-

peded—as his letters to Thomas Poole tell us that they then were—by domestic responsibilities and want of money, that Coleridge should wish to free himself from his undertaking with regard to his disciple. Hence Mr. Lloyd must have been more or less prepared for the letter—dated December 4, 1796—that follows:—

"DEAR SIR,—I think it my duty to acquaint you with the nature of my connection with your Son. If he be to stay with me, I can neither be his tutor or fellow-student, nor in any way impart a regular system of knowledge. My *days* I shall devote to the acquirement of *practical* husbandry and horticulture, that as 'to beg I am ashamed,' I may at least be able 'to dig:' and my evenings will be fully employed in fulfilling my engagements with the 'Critical Review' and 'New Monthly Magazine.' If, therefore, your Son occupy a room in my cottage, he will be there merely as a Lodger and Friend; and the only money I shall *receive* from him will be the sum which his *board* and *lodging* will cost *me*, and which, by an accurate calculation, I find will amount to half a guinea

a week, *exclusive* of his washing, porter, cyder, spirits, in short any potation beyond table-beer—these he must provide himself with. I shall keep no servant.

"I must add that Charles Lloyd must *furnish* his own bedroom. It is not in my power to do it myself without running into debt; from which may Heaven amid its most angry dispensations preserve me!

"When I mentioned the circumstances which rendered my literary engagement impracticable, when, I say, I first mentioned them to Charles Lloyd, and described the severe process of simplification which I had determined to adopt, I never dreamt that he would have desired to continue with me: and when at length he did manifest such a desire, I dissuaded him from it. But his feelings became vehement, and in the present state of his health it would have been as little prudent as humane in me to have given an absolute refusal.

"Will you permit me, Sir! to write of Charles Lloyd with freedom? I do not think he ever will endure, whatever might be the consequences, to practise as a physician, or to undertake any commercial employment.

What weight your authority might have, I know not: I doubt not he would struggle to submit to it—but would he *succeed* in any attempt to which his temper, feelings, and principles are inimical? . . . What then remains? I know of nothing but agriculture. If his attachment to it *should* prove permanent, and he really acquired the steady dispositions of a practical farmer, I think you could wish nothing better for him than to see him married, and settled *near you* as a farmer. I love him, and do not think he will be well or happy till he *is* married and settled.

"I have written plainly and decisively, my dear Sir! I wish to avoid not only evil, but the *appearances* of evil. This is a world of calumnies! Yea! there is an imposthume in the large tongue of this world ever ready to break, and it is well to prevent the contents from being sputtered into one's face. My Wife thanks you for your kind inquiries respecting her. She and our Infant are well—only the latter has met with a little accident—a burn which is doing well.

"To Mrs. Lloyd and all your children pre-

sent my remembrances, and believe me in all esteem and friendliness,

"Yours sincerely,

"S. T. Coleridge.[1]

"Sunday, December 4, 1796."

It was settled as Charles Lloyed wished. He then left Bristol to spend Christmas at home, and the Coleridges prepared to move to Nether Stowey, a transit which was accomplished on the last day of 1796.

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[1] To this letter Mr. Lloyd seems to have returned the question, How could Coleridge live without companions? The answer came quickly, as we learn from a letter from Coleridge to Poole ("Letters," i. p. 186) in which he mentions Mr. Lloyd's query and quotes his own characteristic reply: "I shall have six companions: My Sara, my babe, my own shaping and disquisitive mind, my books, my beloved friend Thomas Poole, and lastly, Nature looking at me with a thousand looks of beauty, and speaking to me in a thousand melodies of love. If I were capable of being tired with all these, I should then detect a vice in my nature, and would fly to habitual solitude to eradicate it." Coleridge's letter to Mr. Lloyd, containing this passage, seems to have been lost.

# III

## COLERIDGE, LAMB, AND CHARLES LLOYD

### 1797

CHARLES LLOYD first met Lamb in January, 1797. Quite unexpectedly, while Coleridge and his family were settling into the Stowey cottage, he visited Lamb in London. Lamb was impressed by him. "I will not tell you what I think of Lloyd," he wrote to Coleridge, "for he may by chance come to see this letter, and that thought puts a restraint on me;" but there is no doubt but that Lamb was prepared for eulogy. A few days later, in another letter to Coleridge, Lamb wrote:—"The emotions I felt on his coming so unlooked for, are not ill-expressed in what follows, and what (if you do not object to them as too personal, and to the world obscure, or otherwise wanting in worth) I should wish to make a part of our little volume." The little volume was the joint collection of their poems which Coleridge and Lamb were then projecting, and Lamb's

verses on Lloyd, which duly found a place in that book, ran thus:—

## TO CHARLES LLOYD, AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR.

Alone, obscure, without a friend.
A cheerless, solitary thing,
Why seeks my Lloyd the stranger out?
What offering can the stranger bring?

Of social scenes, home-bred delights,
That him in ought compensate may
For Stowey's pleasant winter nights,
For loves and friendships far away.

For brief oblivion to forego
Friends, such as thine, so justly dear,
And be awhile with me, content
To stay, a kindly loiterer, here?

For this a gleam of random joy
Hath flush'd my unaccustomed cheek;
And, with an o'er-charged bursting heart,
I feel the thanks I cannot speak.

O! sweet are all the Muse's lays,
And sweet the charm of matin bird—
'Twas long, since these estranged ears
The sweeter voice of friend had heard.

The voice hath spoke: the pleasant sounds,
In memory's ear, in after time,
Shall tide, to sometimes rouse a tear,
And sometimes prompt an honest rhyme.

For when the transient charm is fled,
And when the little week is o'er,
To cheerless, friendless solitude
When I return, as heretofore—

Long, long, within my aching heart
The grateful sense shall cherished be;
I'll think less meanly of myself,
That Lloyd will sometimes think on me.

Charles Lloyd was not a Coleridge, yet at that time Lamb must have found peculiar pleasure and solace in his company. Lamb, who was much in the shadow of the tragedy of the year before, needed a mind as serious and sympathetic as Charles Lloyd's, and their nearness in age—only two days separated them: both would be two-and-twenty in the following month—was an additional bond. Lloyd's spiritual life, in spite of his youth, had been fully lived, and though he lacked nimbleness, flexibility, fun, he was possessed of rare intellectual gifts, which at that time were more to

Lamb's taste than humourous quickness. It is probable that the two friends spoke more of conduct than of literature.

Lloyd rejoined Coleridge at Stowey early in February, 1797. Writing to his brother Robert, on March 2, he said, by way of excuse for not having written sooner: "At Stowey (where I have now been nearly three weeks) I have not been settled till yesterday week—having had my rooms to furnish, so that I only began to lodge at Coleridge's a week ago; in the meantime I was visiting at Mr. Poole's, a friend of Coleridge." Later we come upon a sentence which to us, who accept Lamb, as a matter of course, as one of the great intellects, has an odd ring: "I left Charles Lamb very warmly interested in his favour, and have kept up a regular correspondence with him ever since; he is a most interesting young man." It is sad that every letter in this correspondence has vanished. Saving the one note, dated 1823, from Lamb to Lloyd, in Canon Ainger's edition of the "Letters," not a line remains. Charles Lloyd, however, must not be blamed. He seems carefully to have preserved all letters. It was not until after his death, when his son,

Grosvenor Lloyd, came to examine the collection of papers, that the work of destruction set in.

Lamb seems to have met Robert during Charles's January visit to town, for in the same letter from which quotations have just been made, Charles said: "Charles Lamb desir'd to be remember'd to you whenever I wrote. He took a great liking to you. God bless you, and preserve you virtuous and happy!"

Meanwhile Lloyd had joined the poetical partnership of his two friends. At first Coleridge and Lamb were to make the volume between them; but when, in March, 1797, the printing was almost complete, Coleridge wrote to Cottle, the publisher, saying that Charles Lloyd's poems were to be included too; adding, with more commercial acumen than was usual with him, "Lloyd's connections will take off a great many [copies], more than a hundred."

A very little while later Lloyd, who, as we have seen, had resumed his studies with Coleridge, in spite of Coleridge's statement that such studies must now cease (but Coleridge's statements were rarely absolute) again failed in health. The references to him in Lamb's let-

ters to Coleridge during the spring of 1797 indicate that regular employment had become impossible. Unsettlement grew upon him, and in March or April he found it necessary to leave Stowey. Thus his domestication with Coleridge ended. "You will pray with me, I know, for his recovery," wrote Lamb, "for surely, Coleridge, an exquisiteness of feeling like this must border on derangement. But I love him more and more."

Early in June the volume appeared:—"Poems by S. T. Coleridge, Second Edition. To which are added Poems by Charles Lamb and Charles Lloyd," the title-page bearing the following quotation: "'Duplex nobis vinculum, et amicitiæ et similium junctarumque Camœnarum; quod utinam neque mors solvat neque temporis longinquitas!' Groscoll. Epist. ad Car. Utenhov. et Ptol. Lux. Tast." This motto, an invention of Coleridge's, in whose brain Groscollius had his only being, may be translated freely: "Double is the bond which binds us—friendship, and a kindred taste in poetry. Would that neither death nor lapse of time could dissolve it!" To our eyes, accustomed to the taste which publishers now lavish on

their products, the book is a homely enough little tome; but Coleridge thought otherwise. "The volume is a most beautiful one," he wrote to Cottle. "You have determined that the three Bards shall walk up Parnassus in their best bib and tucker."

It is late in the day to speak critically of this book, nor is this the place in which to do so. Coleridge's performances in the few years immediately following were such as to throw these early efforts and "effusions" into obscurity, and Lamb and Lloyd were wofully serious. Lloyd, especially, paraded his grief; his motto, from Bowles, being:—

> I wrap me in the mantle of distress,
> And tell my poor heart this is happiness.

Altogether, considering what was to happen, we must look upon it as a luckless little volume.

In June, 1797, we find Thomas Poole writing to Lloyd for support in the fund he was collecting for Coleridge; and in the same month Lloyd had sufficiently recovered to think of entertaining Lamb at Birmingham. Lamb, however, could not accept the invitation; instead he paid the visit to Stowey which

won for him the friendship of the Wordsworths (who had just settled at Alfoxden), and led to the composition of Coleridge's poem "This lime-tree bower my prison." Lloyd was not of the party. Two months or so after the Stowey holiday Lamb was able to leave town again, and he then accompanied Lloyd on a visit to Southey at Burton, a village near Christchurch, in Hampshire.

Southey was then just twenty-three; his "Joan of Arc" had appeared two years before, and he was busily composing new verses and planning the "Annual Anthology" for Cottle. The visit was the beginning of a steady correspondence between Lamb and Southey, and possibly between Southey and Lloyd, but of that we have no record.

In September, 1797, Lamb sent Coleridge his touching poem on the anniversary of his mother's death, and appended to it some lines suggested by Lloyd's mental distress:—"The following I wrote when I had returned from Charles Lloyd, leaving him behind at Burton, with Southey." To understand some of it you must remember that at that time he was very much perplexed in mind.

A stranger, and alone, I pass'd those scenes
We pass'd so late together; and my heart
Felt something like desertion, as I look'd
Around me, and the pleasant voice of friend
Was absent, and the cordial look was there
No more, to smile on me. I thought on Lloyd—
All he had been to me! And now I go
Again to mingle with a world impure;
With men who make a mock of holy things,
Mistaken, and of man's best hope think scorn.
The world does much to warp the heart of man;
And I may sometimes join its idiot laugh:
Of this I now complain not. Deal with me,
Omniscient Father, as Thou judgest best,
And in *Thy* season soften Thou my heart.
I pray not for myself. I pray for him
Whose soul is sore perplexed. Shine Thou on him,
Father of lights! and in the difficult paths
Make plain his way before him: his own thoughts
May he not think—his own ends not pursue—
So shall he best perform Thy will on earth.
Greatest and best, Thy will be ever ours!"

"You use Lloyd very ill," Lamb added, "never writing to him. I tell you again that his is not a mind with which you should play tricks. He deserves more tenderness from you."

At the end of the same month—September, 1797—in a letter to Robert, Lloyd wrote:—

"I am at present with Southey at Bath. My

*principles and feelings* remain just the same as when you saw me last. I shall be in London during the winter, and shall hope by some means or other to meet you there, or half way between London and Walden. Lamb often talks of you. I wish you would order from London (they are sold at Robinson's, London) a new edition of Coleridge's 'Poems'—it contains all mine and his, and is just come out. What are you reading? Do write soon. I have been very ill since I last saw you, very ill indeed, so that I thought I never should recover; but, thank God, I am now perfectly well."

The fact of his recovery is thus sufficiently demonstrated. From this date—September, 1797—until the following year, we lose sight of Charles Lloyd. All that is known is that he did not again live with Coleridge, but proceeded from Bath, probably by way of Birmingham, to London. Whether any cause but ill health had determined him not to return to Stowey cannot be said. Possibly his friendship with Southey may have been an anti-Coleridgean influence, for the brothers-in-law were not on the best terms; possibly other forces were in operation.

But whatsoever the reason, it is clear that a coolness was growing, and from it probably came Coleridge's impulse to write the parody of himself and his friends' poetical mannerisms which belong to this period. The skit took the form of three "Sonnets in the Manner of Contemporary Writers," signed "Nehemiah Higginbottom," which appeared in the *Monthly Magazine* for November, 1797. In a letter to Cottle, Coleridge explained their purpose:—

"I sent to the *Monthly Magazine* three mock Sonnets in ridicule of my own Poems, and Charles Lloyd's, and Charles Lamb's, &c., &c., exposing that affectation of unaffectedness, of jumping and misplaced accent, in commonplace epithets, flat lines forced into poetry by italics (signifying how well and mouthishly the author would read them), puny pathos, &c., &c. The instances were all taken from myself and Lloyd and Lamb. I signed them 'Nehemiah Higginbottom.' I think they may do good to our young Bards."

Here are two of the "lessons:"—

Pensive at eve on the hard world I mus'd,
And my poor heart was sad; so at the moon

I gaz'd—and sigh'd and sigh'd !—for ah ! how soon
Eve darkens into night. Mine eye perus'd
With tearful vacancy the *dampy* grass
Which wept and glitter'd in the paly ray ;
And I did pause me on my lonely way,
And mused me on those wretched ones who pass
O'er the black heath of Sorrow. But, alas !
Most of Myself I thought : when it befell
That the sooth spirit of the breezy wood
Breath'd in mine ear—" All this is very well ;
But much of *one* thing is for *no* thing good."
Ah ! my poor heart's inexplicable swell !

## TO SIMPLICITY.

O ! I do love thee, meek *Simplicity !*
For of thy lays the lulling simpleness
Goes to my heart and soothes each small distress
Distress though small, yet haply great to me !
'Tis true on Lady Fortune's gentlest pad
I amble on ; yet, though I know not why,
*So* sad I am !—but should a friend and I
Grow cool and *miff*, O ! I am *very* sad !
And then with sonnets and with sympathy
My dreamy bosom's mystic woes I pall ;
Now of my false friend plaining plaintively,
Now raving at mankind in general ;
But, whether sad or fierce, 'tis simple all,
All very simple, meek Simplicity ![1]

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[1] One unforeseen result of the skit was Southey's determination to take the sonnet "To Simplicity" as an attack on himself.

Lamb probably only laughed, but Lloyd was made of different stuff. He was, as we have seen, and as Coleridge perfectly well knew, a sensitive, affectionate, unworldly creature, destitute of fun and rich in ideals, who could ill understand an old friend and erstwhile spiritual guide making a public mock of him and the poetry that had cost so much dear effort, and in which, however tamely, he had tried to give an expression of his best self. Ridicule is a medicine to be prescribed with great care: Lloyd certainly was not suited to take it. There can be no question that for the dissension which 1798 was to bring forth, Nehemiah Higginbottom was much to blame.

# IV

## "EDMUND OLIVER" AND THE "THESES"

### 1798

In London, Charles Lloyd shared lodgings with James White, schoolfellow of Lamb, friend of chimney-sweepers, and the author of "Original Letters, &c., of Sir John Falstaff" (1796). "For hearty, joyous humour, tinged with Shakespearian fancy," says Talfourd, "White was held by Lamb to have no equal." "Among his intimates," says Gutch, a schoolfellow of Lamb and White, "he was called 'Sir John.'" The picture of this genial neo-Elizabethan presiding over a free supper to chimney-sweepers is one of the glories of "Elia." The passage is a commonplace, yet let a few sentences lend good humour to this book:—

In those little temporary parlours three tables were spread with napery, not so fine as substantial, and at every board a comely hostess presided with her pan of hissing sausage. The nostrils of the young rogues dilated at the savour. James White, as head waiter, had charge of the first

table; and myself, with our trusty companion Bigod, ordinarily ministered to the other two. There was clambering and jostling, you may be sure, who should get at the first table—for Rochester in his maddest days could not have done the humours of the scene with more spirit than my friend. After some general expression of thanks for the honour the company had done him, his inaugural ceremony was to clasp the greasy waist of old dame Ursula (the fattest of the three), that stood frying and fretting, half blessing, half cursing "the gentleman," and imprint upon her chaste lips a tender salute, whereat the universal host would set up a shout that tore the concave, while hundreds of grinning teeth startled the night with their brightness. O it was a pleasure to see the sable younkers lick in the unctuous meat, with *his* more unctuous sayings—how he could fit the tit-bits to the puny mouths, reserving the lengthier links for the seniors —how he would intercept a morsel even in the jaws of some young desperado, declaring it "must to the pan again to be browned, for it was not fit for a gentleman's eating"—how he would recommend this slice of white bread or that piece of kissing-crust to a tender juvenile, advising them all to have a care of cracking their teeth, which were their best patrimony,—how genteelly he would deal about the small ale, as if it were wine, naming the brewer, and protesting, if it were not good, he should lose their custom; with a special recommendation to wipe the lip before drinking. Then we had our toasts —"The King,"—"The Cloth,"—which, whether they understood or not, was equally diverting and flattering;— and for a crowning sentiment, which never failed, "May

the Brush supersede the Laurel!" All these, and fifty other fancies, which were rather felt than comprehended by his guests, would he utter, standing upon tables, and prefacing every sentiment with a "Gentlemen, give me leave to propose so-and-so," which was a prodigious comfort to those young orphans; every now and then stuffing into his mouth (for it did not do to be squeamish on these occasions) indiscriminate pieces of those reeking sausages, which pleased them mightily, and was the savouriest part, you may believe, of the entertainment.

> "Golden lads and lassies must,
> As chimney-sweepers, come to dust."

James White is extinct, and with him these suppers have long ceased. He carried away with him half the fun of the world when he died—of my world at least.

With such a character, then, was Lloyd living at the end of 1797 and beginning of 1798. "No two men," as Southey said, "could be imagined more unlike each other. Lloyd had no drollery in his nature; White seemed to have nothing else. You will easily understand how Lamb could sympathise with both."

It was during Lloyd's domestication with James White that the first signs of ill-feeling between Lloyd and Lamb were visible. In the

middle of January, 1798, Lamb wrote to Coleridge:—

"I had well nigh quarrelled with Charles Lloyd; and for no other reason, I believe, than that the good creature did all he could to make me happy. The truth is, I thought he tried to force my mind from its natural and proper bent. He continually wished me to be from home; he was drawing me *from* the consideration of my poor dear Mary's situation, rather than assisting me to gain a proper view of it with religious consolations. I wanted to be left to the tendency of my own mind, in a solitary state, which, in times past, I knew had led to quietness and a patient bearing of the yoke. He was hurt that I was not more constantly with him; but he was living with White, a man to whom I had never been accustomed to impart my *dearest feelings*, tho' from long habits of friendliness, and many a social and good quality, I loved him very much. I met company there sometimes—indiscriminate company. Any society almost, when I am in affliction, is sorely painful to me. I seem to breathe more freely, to think more collectedly, to feel more properly and calmly, when alone. All these

things the good creature did with the kindest intentions in the world, but they produced in me nothing but soreness and discontent. I became, as he complained, 'jaundiced' towards him . . . but he has forgiven me; and his smile, I hope, will draw all such humours from me."

If, in connection with this letter, Lamb's touching elegiacs "The Old Familiar Faces," composed in the same month, are re-considered, one or two references may be made clear. For many years the fourth stanza:

> I have a friend, a kinder friend has no man:
> Like an ingrate, I left my friend abruptly;
> Left him, to muse on the old familiar faces—

was held to refer to Coleridge. But Canon Ainger, in the notes to his edition of Lamb's "Letters," has conclusively shown that Lloyd was meant; Coleridge was the friend, "more than a brother," of the sixth stanza.

Yet although Lamb and Lloyd were again perfectly reconciled, and were busy in preparing their joint volume of "Blank Verse," in which "The Old Familiar Faces" was first printed, more disaster was brewing. The story of the

alienation of Coleridge from his two friends may best be told in the late Mr. Dykes Campbell's words: "In March [1798] there had been talk of a third edition of Coleridge's 'Poems,' and on hearing of it Lloyd begged Cottle to 'persuade' Coleridge to omit his. This caused Coleridge to reply, smilingly ["Letters," i. p. 238], that no persuasion was needed for the omission of verses published at the earnest request of the author; and that though circumstances had made the Groscollian motto now look ridiculous, he accepted the punishment of his folly, closing his letter with the characteristically sententious reflection, 'By past experience we build up our moral being.'"

What happened after that is not clear, but Coleridge seems to have found in Lloyd cause for grief so intense that it led him to retire to the "lonely farmhouse between Porlock and Linton," where, to allay the disturbance of his mind, he had recourse to opium, and under its dire and seductive influence composed "Kubla Khan." (Coleridge himself assigns an earlier date to the poem, but Mr. Dykes Campbell's chronology is more trustworthy.) The poet continued

to brood over the rupture of a friendship that had begun so auspiciously. In the middle of May, when his second child was born, we find him, in writing to Poole concerning an impending bereavement, telling him that he can the better sympathise by reason of sorrows of his own that have "cut more deeply" into his heart "than they ought to have done;" which Mr. Dykes Campbell considered a further allusion to Lloyd's attitude, and to the fact that Lamb was also becoming alienated.

In June, 1798, the worthy Cottle, hoping to patch up the disagreement, wrote to Lloyd urging him to visit Coleridge. "I cannot," was Lloyd's reply, "think that I have acted with, or from, passion towards him. Even my solitary night thoughts have been easy and calm when they have dwelt on him. . . . I love Coleridge, and can forget all that has happened. At present I could not well go to Stowey. I could scarcely excuse so sudden a removal from my parents. Lamb quitted me yesterday, after a fortnight's visit. I have been much interested in his society. I never knew him so happy in my life. I shall write to Coleridge to-day."

On Coleridge's side there was, however, more to forgive: there was Lloyd's novel "Edmund Oliver." This was the young man's crowning offence, for in it he had made use of Coleridge's own experiences as Private Silas Tomkyn Comberbach. "The incidents," said the author in his preface, "relative to the army were given me by an intimate friend, who was himself eye-witness to one of them, and can produce testimony to the truth of the other two." That Coleridge's own story, told to Lloyd at his fireside, had been drawn upon, there can be no doubt. Moreover, the novel contained other passages which Coleridge was quick to apply to himself: Edmund Oliver's love-fits and departure from college tallied with his own experience; the description of him: "His large glistening eye—his dark eyebrows—there was the same bend in the shoulder . . . and the dark hair"—fitted Coleridge too; and this piece of self-revelation in which Oliver elsewhere indulged was painfully applicable to the poet: "I have at all times a strange dreaminess about me, which makes me indifferent to the future, if I can by any means fill the present with sensations. With that dreaminess I have gone on

here from day to day; if at any time thought troubled, I have swallowed some spirits, or had recourse to my laudanum." Lloyd's conduct was indefensible, and Coleridge's anger, which was excessive, was not lessened by the circumstance that the novel was dedicated to Lamb and published by Cottle. The book itself, which to-day would be labelled "psychological romance," is undeniably clever, although often extremely foolish. As a record of the emotions of a last century "sensitive plant" it is remarkable.

Coleridge, it may be noted here, was not the only person who was troubled by the publication of "Edmund Oliver." Mrs. Lloyd wrote thus to her son Robert on the subject:—

"I am sorry thou shouldst have inform'd her [Mrs. Day, his employer's wife] that 'E. Oliver' was published with our 'approbation and concurrence.' We were never consulted. For my own part I did not comprehend the nature of the Book till I saw it; and tho' I fully allow there are some fine sentiments in it, thou well know'st it was far from having either thy Father's or my indiscriminate approbation —nay, I am sure there was one passage that

wounded me to the quick, and thou must frequently have heard me say I hoped Charles would *never* be a Novel writer; I can honestly say I should rather see him engaged in the most humble occupation that I thought consistent with Christian simplicity. With respect to these writings in general I most sincerely concur in sentiment with S. D. [Mrs. Day again], and wish it had been in my power to keep my Family as clear of them as she has done. Till I am convinc'd that the Christian Religion is a Fable, I shall never think the imagination can *riot* in the *delicious* luxury of sentiment and warm descriptions of the passions, and the Heart remain pure. I have studied the New Testament as much as most, but have never yet discover'd, with the philosophers of the present day, that the Christian warfare is accomplished by indulging the mind in every kind of dissipation provided we keep clear of gross vice. If this be the case, surely He who said 'Strait is the gate and narrow is the way,' and those who accounted themselves as 'Pilgrims and Strangers on the Earth,' were *greatly mistaken*."

"Edmund Oliver" was Lloyd's unpardonable

offence; and hard upon it came Lamb's scornful "Theses." Coleridge had written, presumably to Lloyd, "Poor Lamb, if he wants any *knowledge* he may apply to me," and the passage had been brought to Lamb's notice. He replied with a sarcastic letter and this famous series of posers:—

THESES QUÆDAM THEOLOGICÆ.

I.

"Whether God loves a lying angel better than a true man?"

II.

"Whether the archangel Uriel *could* knowingly affirm an untruth, and whether, if he *could*, he *would?*"

III.

"Whether honesty be an angelic virtue, or not rather belonging to that class of qualities which the schoolmen term 'virtutes minus splendidæ et hominis et terræ nimis participes'?"

IV.

"Whether the seraphim ardentes do not manifest their goodness by the way of vision and theory? and whether practice be not a sub-celestial and merely human virtue?"

V.

"Whether the higher order of seraphim illuminati ever *sneer?*"

VI.

"Whether pure intelligences can *love*, or whether they can love anything besides pure intellect?"

VII.

"Whether the beatific vision be anything more or less than a perpetual representment to each individual angel of his own present attainments, and future capabilities, something in the manner of mortal looking-glasses?"

VIII.

"Whether an 'immortal and amenable soul' may not come *to be damned at last, and the man never suspect it beforehand?*"

Coleridge, more in sorrow than in anger, sent Lamb's letter to Cottle, remarking "These young visionaries will do each other no good," and so was snapped the cord binding Coleridge and Lamb.

Coleridge deeply felt the disagreement. In his "Letters" (p. 249 and onwards) may be found a copy of the long remonstrance which he addressed to Lamb on the subject. Mr. E. H. Coleridge dates it in the spring of 1798; but more probably the time was the summer, after the receipt of Lamb's "Theses." For our purpose the following extract is sufficient:—

"Both you and Lloyd became acquainted with me when your minds were far from being in a composed or natural state, and you clothed my image with a suit of notions and feelings which could belong to nothing human. You are restored to comparative saneness, and are merely wondering what is become of the Coleridge with whom you were so passionately in love; *Charles Lloyd's* mind has only changed his disease, and he is now arraying his ci-devant angel in a flaming San Benito—the whole ground of the garment a dark brimstone, and plenty of little devils flourished out in black. Oh, me! Lamb, 'even in laughter the heart is sad.'"

In after years Lamb threw the blame of the quarrel on Lloyd; yet, although, as has been said, "Edmund Oliver" is indefensible, a word must be said for its author. It is true that Lloyd's deplorable habit of showing scraps of private letters to the very person above all others who should not have seen them was reprehensible enough, yet Coleridge, suspecting or knowing this habit, might have done better than to entrust to Lloyd remarks concerning Lamb which he did not wish Lamb to see; and

Lamb might either have forbidden Lloyd to read such remarks, or—coming by them thus illicitly—have forgotten them. Lloyd, as far as it is possible to estimate his character, was a clean-hearted, unworldly man, innocent of guile. For such bad habits as he had, shrewd and humourous intelligences like Coleridge and Lamb might well have made allowances. But it is noticeable how often the sense of humour is dulled when loss of personal dignity is involved.

Again, say what one can for or against Lloyd, there is no doubt that without his assistance the relations between Lamb and Coleridge were inevitably doomed to a strain. When we remember that they both were very young—in 1798 Coleridge was twenty-six and Lamb twenty-three—and both poets, and both free critics of each other's work, we can understand any temporary coolness that may have arisen. Such quarrels always have occurred between young poets, and probably always will. They are regrettable to some extent; yet "by past experience the moral being is built up," and the "falling out of faithful friends renewing is of love." In the case before us the

love of both men was renewed and intensified. Their separation lasted only until the end of 1799, and then they came together again, and together remained.

Here, as a fitting close to a chapter too much occupied with dissension, Lamb's dedication to Coleridge of the first collected edition of his works—issued in 1818—may well be quoted:—

It would be a kind of disloyalty to offer to anyone but yourself a volume containing the *early pieces*, which were first published among your poems, and were fairly derivatives from you and them. My friend Lloyd and myself came into our first battle (authorship is a sort of warfare) under the cover of the greater Ajax. How this association, which shall always be a dear and proud recollection to me, came to be broken—who snapped the threefold cord,—whether yourself (but I know that was not the case) grew ashamed of your former companions,—or whether (which is by much the more probable) some ungracious bookseller was author of the separation,—I cannot tell;—but wanting the support of your friendly elm (I speak for myself), my vine has, since that time, put forth few or no fruits; the sap (if ever it had any) has become, in a manner, dried up and extinct; and you will find your old associate, in his second volume, dwindled into prose and *criticism*.

Am I right in assuming this as the cause? or is it that, as years come upon us, (except with some more healthy,

happy spirits,) Life itself loses much of its Poetry for us? We transcribe but what we read in the great volume of Nature; and, as the characters grow dim, we turn off, and look another way. You yourself write no Christabels, nor Ancient Mariners, now.

Some of the Sonnets, which shall be carelessly turned over by the general reader, may happily awaken in you remembrances which I should be sorry should be ever totally extinct—the memory

> Of summer days and of delightful years—

even so far back as to those old suppers at our old * * * * * * * * * Inn—when life was fresh, and topics exhaustless,—and you first kindled in me, if not the power, yet the love of poetry, and beauty, and kindliness—

> What words have I heard
> Spoke at the Mermaid?

The world has given you many a shrewd nip and gird since that time, but either my eyes are grown dimmer, or my old friend is the *same*, who "stood before me three-and-twenty year" ago—his hair a little confessing the hand of time, but still shrouding the same capacious brain,—his heart not altered, scarcely where it "alteration finds."

That is the true and permanent part of Lamb speaking to the true and permanent part of Coleridge. And from the fact that Lloyd is mentioned with kindness in this preface, and the inclusion of Lamb's early verses to him,

we may imply that for him also Lamb's heart was again warm.[1]

Lamb, in 1818, was not the only member of that company of three whose thoughts were travelling back to the old days. Charles Lloyd, who at that time, as we shall see, was just on the brink of a new period of poetic activity, was beginning his longest and incom-

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[1] Here it might be interesting to quote a passage from a letter written by Charles Lloyd to Robert Lloyd some ten years earlier :—

"The more I think of the renewal of your intercourse with C. Lamb, the more I am pleased. I divide the quarrels which I may have chance to have had with those persons with whom I have been acquainted into two classes. The one consists of those quarrels where a mere want of sympathy on a given transaction has led to misconception, to altercation, to passion, to separation; but where nothing has occurred to lower your opinion of the moral and intellectual worth of your friend,* of this character has been my *refroidissement* with C. Lamb. Indeed, in this case the very excess of tenaciousness that led him to be offended with me has its foundation in a most exalted quality, disinterested, and almost unexampled attachment. The other class of quarrels embraces those which originate in the detection of meanness, duplicity, malevolence on the part of your former acquaintance, now converted into an adversary. These quarrels I never surmount—I may forgive the transactions that led to them, but I can *never, never forget* them."

* To the word accompanied by an asterisk the note is: "Such a man is a generous foe whom I can esteem—there is even love in the quarrel!"

By way of postscript Charles Lloyd adds: "If you do write to Lamb, remember me to him and his sister." This was in 1809.

parably best poem, "Desultory Thoughts in London," in which he paid tributes to both his old associates. It is at the present stage that quotations will most fitly come. This is Coleridge:—

How shall I fitly speak on such a theme?
He is a treasure by the world neglected,
Because he hath not with a prescience dim,
Like those whose every aim is self-reflected,
Pil'd up some fastuous trophy, that of him
Might tell, what mighty powers the age rejected,
But taught his lips the office of a *pen*—
By fools he's deem'd a being lost to men.

. . . . . .

No! with magnanimous self-sacrifice,
And lofty inadvertency of fame,
He felt there is a bliss in *being* wise,
Quite independent of the wise man's *name*.
Who now can say how many a soul may rise
To a nobility of moral aim
It ne'er had known, but for that spirit brave,
Which, being freely gifted, freely gave?

Sometimes I think that I'm a blossom blighted;
But this I ken, that should it not prove so,
If I am not inexorably spited
Of all that dignifies mankind below;
By him I speak of, I was so excited,
While reason's scale was poising to and fro,

"To the better cause;" that him I have to bless
For that which it is comfort to possess.

. . . . .

No! Those who most have seen me, since the hour
When thou and I, in former happier days,
Frank converse held, though many an adverse power
Have sought the memory of those times to raze,
Can vouch that more it stirs me (thus a tower,
Sole remnant of vast castle, still betrays
Haply its former splendour) to have prov'd
Thy love, than by fresh friends to have been lov'd.

And this is Lamb:—

Oft when steals on the meditative hour,
And parlour twilight to repose invites;
Oft when Imagination's stirring power
Keeps watch with hollow blasts of winter nights;
Thy countenance bright upon his heart doth shower,
By Memory trac'd, the exquisite delights,
Which from thy smile, and from thy every tone,
And intercourse ennobling, he has known.

. . . . . .

It is a dainty banquet, known to few,
To thy mind's inner shrine to have access;
While choicest stores of intellect endue
That sanctuary, in marvellous excess.
There lambent glories, ever bright and new,
Those, privileged to be its inmates, bless!
Such as by gods, in tributary rite,
Were hail'd from earth, e'en on their thrones of light!

. . . . . .

But stop!—'tis vain!—For none will comprehend
Though line on line dilate upon the theme:
He simply wishes to assure his friend,
How that his image (like a morning beam,
Dear to the eye, especially if end
It bring to wicked and portentous dream)
In transient intercourse, and seldom given,
Is bless'd to him as visitant from Heaven.

(Allsop, by the way, in his reminiscences of Coleridge, quotes the following lines on Lamb, which he ascribes to Lloyd:—

The child of impulse ever to appear,
And yet through duty's path strictly to steer!
Oh, Lamb, thou art a mystery to me!
Thou art so prudent, and so mad with wildness,
Thou art a source of everlasting glee!
Yet desolation of the very childless
Has been thy lot! Never in one like thee
Did I see worth majestic from its mildness;
So far in thee from being an annoyance
E'en to the vicious 'tis a source of joyance.)

One more extract, to prove the completeness of the reconciliation of Coleridge and Lamb. In his own copy of his "Poetical Works," 1834, Coleridge wrote in pencil, on his death-

bed, against the poem "This lime-tree bower my prison," the words:—"*Ch. and Mary Lamb —dear to my heart, yea, as it were, my heart.— S.T.C. Æt.* 63, 1834. 1797–1834=37 *years!*"

## V

### "THE ANTI-JACOBIN"

1798

To return to 1798, from which, for the sake of sentimental symmetry, we have strayed some distance, it happened, by a freak of irony, that while in private life Coleridge and Lamb and Coleridge and Lloyd had drifted apart, they were placed under the public accusation of being bound together not only in firm union, but in a union inimical to society. In the satirical poem entitled "The New Morality," the last brilliant star discharged roman-candle like by *The Anti-Jacobin*, the Bristol Pantisocratists and their comrades in poetry were thus grouped :-

> And ye five other wandering Bards that move
> In sweet accord of harmony and love,
> C——dge and S—th—y, L—d, and L—be and Co.
> Tune all your mystic harps to praise Lepaux !

That was in the number of July 9, 1798. *The Anti-Jacobin* then disappeared in favour

of *The Anti-Jacobin Review and Magazine*, the first number of which—published on August 1—was enriched by a coloured cartoon by Gillray, wherein the particular passage of "The New Morality" which described the worship of Lepaux received the emphasis of coloured illustration. In this picture, which is a fair specimen of Gillray's bludgeon-pencil, a crowd of the more prominent English revolutionists press forward to worship Justice, Philanthropy, and Sensibility. Chief of them is the Duke of Bedford as Leviathan. Among the others is Colridge (the spelling is Gillray's) in the guise of a donkey, offering a volume of "Dactylics," and Southey, as another donkey, flourishing a volume of "Saphics." In Southey's pocket is a copy of "Joan of Arc." Behind, seated side by side, poring over a manuscript entitled "Blank Verse, by Toad and Frog," are a toad and frog. These are marked in the key plan Lloyd and Lamb.[1]

[1] It is told that not long after the appearance of Gillray's picture, Lamb met Godwin for the first time. Lamb was in uproarious spirits, and in spite of the extreme infancy of their acquaintance persisted in chaffing the philosopher. Godwin at last was roused to put the mischievous question: "Pray, Mr. Lamb, are you toad or frog?" An

No attempt to depict the portrait of any of the four was made by the artist.

Coleridge and Southey may have been fair game for the satirist, but Lamb and Lloyd certainly were not. Coleridge and Southey had collaborated in "The Fall of Robespierre" (1794). Coleridge also had lectured at Bristol in 1795 on political questions, and had criticised Pitt with some severity; and these lectures, on being published under the titles "Conciones ad Populum" and "The Plot Discovered," had an addition by Southey. Coleridge also was a contributor to the *Morning Post*, and the friend of Citizen Thelwall, who, when he visited Stowey, was watched by a spy sent thither for the purpose by the Government. Lloyd, save for an inoperative sympathy with universal brotherhood, was, however, quite harmless; while Lamb, who detested the whole business, was practically on the other side. However, a man is judged by the company he keeps.

That Coleridge was singularly distasteful to the Anti-Jacobin mind is proved by a note ap-

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outburst of temper from Lamb was feared, but instead, the joke helped forward the friendship of the two men.

pended to "The New Morality," when it was reprinted in the following year in "The Beauties of *The Anti-Jacobin*." It ran thus :—

"Some of these youths were sadly corrupted in the *metropolis*, and initiated in the mysteries of Theophilanthropism, when scholars at that excellent seminary, Christ's Hospital. C——dge was nominated to an Exhibition at Cambridge, and the Vice-Master (soon after his admission) sent to him, on account of his non-attendance at chapel. This illuminated gentleman affected astonishment that any criminality could attach to him for his non-performance of religious worship, the trickery of Priestcraft, but if his presence was required, *pro forma*, as at a muster-roll, he had no great objection to attend. To the disgrace of discipline, and a Christian University, this avowed Deist was not expelled for such sin. His equalising spirit and eccentricities have reduced this poetaster occasionally to such difficulties, that almost in want of bread he once addressed a soldier in the Park—'*Are you one of the cutthroats of the despot?*' The man was at first astonished, but he soon found that his distress had determined him to enlist. His friends have frequently

extricated him from this and other embarrassments. He has since married, had children, and has now quitted the country, become a citizen of the world, left his little ones fatherless, and his wife destitute. *Ex uno disce* his associates Southey and Lambe." Poor New Moralists!—never were men robbed of their characters more lightheartedly or with less justification. "Lambe" must indeed have been startled by the indictment. Southey, in writing to his friend Wynn on the subject, in August, 1798, said:—"I know not what poor Lamb has done to be croaking there; and what I think the worst part of *The Anti-Jacobin* is the lumping together men of such opposite principles; this was stupid. We should have all been welcoming the *Director*, not the *Theophilanthrope* [Lepaux]."

Lloyd, in a companion foot-note, was thus not unkindly explained:—"Mr. Lloyd was originally of that fraternity which delights in 'Meetings for Sufferings.' He is descended from an opulent banker, and connected with the first families of *friends*. Like his relation at Norwich, he has adopted the original principles of George Fox, the founder, relative to

Priests and Kings. Mr. Gurney was excluded the Society for irregularities, but when a candidate to represent his native city in Parliament was readmitted into the bond of unity against all constituted authorities. Mr. Lloyd continues estranged from the 'Thou's and Thee's' (the language of Mercorant, a quondam Chairman at Versailles, and late President of the Commune of Paris—*vide* 'Clery's Journal,' p. 173), for he has not hypocrisy sufficient for the profession."

Lloyd took the caricature and the verses with his customary seriousness, going so far as to indite a "Letter to the Anti-Jacobin Reviewers," which was printed in Birmingham in 1799. Therein he defended Lamb with some vigour: "The person you have thus leagued in a partnership of infamy with me is Mr. Charles Lamb, a man who, so far from being a democrat, would be the first person to assent to the opinions contained in the foregoing pages: he is a man too much occupied with real and painful duties—duties of high personal self-denial—to trouble himself about speculative matters."

Lepaux himself, of whom it is quite probable

that Lamb and Lloyd had never heard, and Coleridge and Southey never thought, except with amusement, was a member of the Directory, and the leader of a sect of Deists who, under the name of the Theophilanthropists, or lovers of God and man, came into being to supply France with some form of natural religion in place of total spiritual anarchy. The Theophilanthropists, although opposed to Christianity, believed in the existence of God and in the immortality of the soul. During their services there was a short pause, in which the congregation might meditate in silence on their conduct since the last meeting. The following sentences, which, if strictly observed, could lead no one into trouble, were displayed conspicuously in the place of meeting :—

Adore God, cherish your fellow creatures, render yourselves useful to your country.

Good is whatever tends to preserve man or to perfectionate him.

Evil is whatever tends to destroy him or to deteriorate him.

Children, honour your father and mother, obey them with affection, solace their old age. Fathers and mothers, instruct your children.

Wives, behold in your husbands the heads of your houses.

Husbands, love your wives, and render yourselves mutually happy.

The four special holidays of the Theophilanthropists were in honour of Socrates, St. Vincent de Paul, Jean Jacques Rousseau, and George Washington.

Subsequently, in a piece entitled "The Anarchists: an Ode"—an imitation of Collins's "Ode to the Passions"—which also appeared in *The Anti-Jacobin Review and Magazine*, the luckless quartette were again castigated. Thus (the mighty dam being Anarchy):—

See! faithful to their mighty dam,
Coleridge, Southey, Lloyd, and Lamb,
In splay-foot madrigals of love,
Soft moaning like the widowed dove,
Pour side by side their sympathetic notes,
Of equal rights and civic feasts
And tyrant Kings and knavish Priests.
Swift through the land the tuneful mischief floats.
And now to softer strains they struck the lyre,
They sung the beetle, or the mole,
The dying kid, or ass's foal,
By cruel men permitted to expire.

And there the *Anti-Jacobin* attack ended.

Eleven years later, however, another satirist, the young and spirited author of "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers" (1809), again grouped them. This time not Lepaux, but Wordsworth, was the alleged object of their adoration: Wordsworth,

> Whose verse, of all but childish prattle void,
> Seems blessed harmony to Lamb and Lloyd.

His Lordship added in an explanatory footnote that "Messrs. Lamb and Lloyd" were "the most ignoble followers of Southey and Co."

# VI

## CHARLES LAMB AND ROBERT LLOYD

### 1798–1799

In the autumn of 1798, almost immediately after Charles Lloyd had settled at Cambridge, began Lamb's correspondence with Robert Lloyd, by which our store of Lamb literature is enriched to the extent of some seventeen letters. Robert came third in the Lloyd family. He was born December 10, 1778, and thus was not quite twenty at the time of Lamb's first letter, which was addressed to him at Saffron Walden, in Essex, while he was serving his time as apprentice. Lamb, as we suppose, had met Robert early in 1797, during Charles Lloyd's visit to town, and had liked him on sight, and their acquaintance probably was renewed at Birmingham in the summer of 1798.

Not, however, until October of 1798 does Lamb seem to have written directly to his

young friend. This first letter is undated, but in October of that year Mary Lamb had an attack which, says her brother, writing to Southey, "frightened me a good deal," and we may presume it is that attack to which Lamb here alludes. This is the letter: Lamb, at the time, was approaching his twenty-fourth birthday—

My dear Robert,—I am a good deal occupied with a calamity near home, but not so much as to prevent my thinking about you with the warmest affection—you are among my very dearest friends. I know you will feel deeply when you hear that my poor sister is unwell again; one of her old disorders, but I trust it will hold no longer than her former illnesses have done. Do not imagine, Robert, that I sink under this misfortune, I have been season'd to such events, and think I could bear anything tolerably well. My own health is left me, and my good spirits, and I have some duties to perform—these duties shall be *my object*. I wish, Robert, *you* could find an object. I know the painfulness of vacuity, all its achings and inexplicable longings. I wish to God I

could recommend any plan to you. Stock your mind well with religious knowledge; discipline it to wait with patience for duties that may be your lot in life; prepare yourself not to expect too much out of yourself; *read* and *think*. This is all commonplace advice, I know. I know, too, that it is easy to give advice which in like circumstances we might not follow ourselves. You must depend upon yourself—there will come a time when you will wonder you were not more content. I know you will excuse my saying any more.

"Be assured of my kindest, warmest affection.

"C. LAMB."

It is evident, both from this letter and one or two that follow, that Robert Lloyd was in an unhappy mental state. Though by temperament unfitted ever to be as seriously unsettled as Charles, he was dissatisfied both with his employment and with the restrictions imposed upon him by his parents. He seems to have chafed continually, and now and then openly to have revolted. A gentle, solicitous letter from his mother, belonging to this period, has

the following quaint passage:—"I was griev'd to hear of thy appearing in those *fantastical* trousers in London. I am clear such excentricities of dress would only make thee laugh'd at by the World, whilst thy sincere Friends would be *deeply hurt*. Canst thou love thy Father and yet do things that sink him as well as thyself in the opinion of our best Friends! Thou art, my dear Son, form'd to make an amiable Figure in Society, but for once trust to the judgment of thy Mother, neither thy Person or Mind are form'd for excentricities of dress or conduct." And Robert's father was also moved to write on the subject, but with fewer particulars: "Thou wilt please me by observing simplicity in thy dress and manners. Do not let the customs of the world influence thee." Robert, however, was young, and at a certain age it is natural to suspect the counsel of all but contemporaries. Not for his parents but for Lamb did his confidences ripen.

From the tone of Lamb's next letter we may suppose that Robert Lloyd's reply to the earlier one had been not only unduly adulatory, but a very cry from the depths for sympathy and appreciation. It was in the nature both

of his brother Charles and himself to be hero-worshippers, and his new friend's kindly interest may naturally have prompted him to a burst of that deprecatory self-revelation to which sensitive youths of warm affections are prone, coupled with an appeal to Lamb to supply the part of mentor. Lamb replied with grave deliberation:—

"My dear Robert,—Mary is better, and I trust that she will yet be restored to me. I am in good spirits, so do not be anxious about me. I hope you get reconciled to your situation. The worst in it is that you have no *friend* to talk to—but wait in patience, and you will in good time make friends. The having a friend is not indispensably necessary to virtue or happiness. Religion removes those barriers of sentiment which partition us from the disinterested love of our brethren—we are commanded to love our enemies, to do good to those that hate us; how much more is it our duty then to cultivate a forbearance and complacence towards those who only differ from us in dispositions and ways of thinking. There is always, without very unusual care there must

always be, something of Self in friendship; we love our friend because he is like ourselves; can consequences altogether unmix'd and pure be reasonably expected from such a source—do not even the publicans and sinners the same? Say, that you love a friend for his moral qualities, is it not rather because those qualities resemble what you fancy your own? This, then, is not without danger. The only true cement of a valuable friendship, the only thing that even makes it not sinful, is when two friends propose to become mutually of benefit to each other in a moral or religious way. But even this friendship is perpetually liable to the mixture of something not pure; we love our friend, because he is *ours*—so we do our money, our wit, our knowledge, our virtue; and wherever this sense of APPROPRIATION and PROPERTY enters, so much is to be subtracted from the value of that friendship or that virtue. Our duties are to do good, expecting nothing again; to bear with contrary dispositions; to be candid and forgiving, not to crave and long after a communication of sentiment and feeling, but rather to avoid dwelling upon those feelings, however good, because they are our

own. A man may be intemperate and selfish who indulges in *good feelings* for the mere pleasure they give him. I do not wish to deter you from making a friend, a true friend, and such a friendship, where the parties are not blind to each other's faults, is very useful and valuable. I perceive a tendency in you to this error, Robert. I know you have chosen to take up an high opinion of my moral worth, but I say it before God, and I do not lie, you are mistaken in me. I could not bear to lay open all my failings to you, for the sentiment of shame would be too pungent. Let this be as an example to you. Robert, friends fall off, friends mistake us, they change, they grow unlike us, they go away, they die; but God is everlasting and incapable of change, and to Him we may look with cheerful, unpresumptous hope, while we discharge the duties of life in situations more untowardly than yours. You complain of the impossibility of improving yourself, but be assured that the opportunity of improvement lies more in the mind than the situation. Humble yourself before God, cast out the selfish principle, wait in patience, do good in every way you can to all sorts of

people, never be easy to neglect a duty tho' a small one, praise God for all, and see His hand in all things, and He will in time raise you up *many friends*—or be Himself instead an unchanging friend. God bless you.

"C. LAMB."

Here we see Charles Lamb in a new and beautiful character. That he was ready to be kind and helpful on occasion we have proof enough; but there is no letter among all those already published that shows him in the light of the patient, understanding counsellor of a young man in spiritual difficulties. What was the condition of Lamb's own mind at that time cannot clearly be stated. There are, in his correspondence with matured men, signs that it was unsettled, but he was able with unparalleled clarity and reasonableness to advise a younger and less-experienced acquaintance. Leaving aside the matter of this letter, it must have been no small thing to Lamb to turn from his literary hobbies, social duties and pleasures, to write at such length to a youth as markedly-unformed and intellectually-backward as Robert Lloyd.

The boy had, however, a very winning way. He was, we may consider, impetuous, frank, affectionate, intolerant of even the semblance of deception, and impatient of all checks upon emotion. His mind was less serious and contemplative than that of his brother Charles, but not less eager for the light by which a man should live. We have seen that Charles was averse from laughter, but one can fancy Robert laughing often and with zest.

It is hardly to be wondered at that a young man thus equipped should find the strict practices of the Quakers distasteful; and on leaving Saffron Walden, which he did at this time, and returning to home life at Birmingham, Robert came into active conflict with his family on the subject. He was indeed in a position of peculiar discomfort, for his temperament prevented him from accepting their creed, and his honesty disabled him from affecting to do so. This is no place for an inquiry into that creed; it is here enough to say that the peaceable professions of the Society of Friends are less compatible with youth than with age; and Robert Lloyd was twenty. His especial dislike seems to have been the silent meetings,

grave and inactive, with no ritual for the organisation of wandering thoughts, no music to allure the soul from a mundane environment. To Lamb he poured out his objections, and received in reply this solemn and touching appeal:—

"My dear Robert,—I acknowledge I have been sadly remiss of late. If I descend to any excuse (and all excuses that come short of a direct denial of a charge are poor creatures at best), it must be taken from my state of mind for some time past, which has been stupid rather, and unfilled with any object, than occupied, as you may imagine, with any favourite idea to the exclusion of friend Robert. You, who are subject to all the varieties of the mind, will give me credit in this.

"I am sadly sorry that you are relapsing into your old complaining strain. I wish I could adapt my consolations to your disease, but, alas! I have none to offer which your own mind, and the suggestions of books, cannot better supply. Are you the first whose situation hath not been exactly squar'd to his ideas? or rather, will you find me that man who does

not complain of the one thing wanting? That thing obtained, another wish will start up. While this eternal craving of the mind keeps up its eternal hunger, no feast that my palate knows of will satisfy that hunger till we come to drink the new wine (whatever it be) in the Kingdom of the Father. See what trifles disquiet us.—You are Unhappy because your Parents expect you to attend meetings. I don't know much of Quakers' meetings, but I believe I may moderately reckon them to take up the space of six hours in the week. Six hours to please your parents—and that time not absolutely lost. Your mind remains, you may think, and plan, remember, and foresee, and do all human acts of mind sitting as well as walking. You are quiet at meeting: one likes to be so sometimes; you may advantageously crowd your day's devotions into that space. Nothing you see or hear there can be unfavourable to it—you are for that time at least exempt from the counting-house, and your parents cannot chide you there; surely at so small expense you cannot grudge to observe the Fifth Commandment. I decidedly consider your refusal as a breach of that God-

descended precept—Honour and observe thy parents in all lawful things. Silent worship cannot be *Un*lawful; there is no Idolatry, no invocation of saints, no bowing before the consecrated wafer in all this, nothing which a wise man would refuse, or a good man fear to do. What is it? Sitting a few hours in a week with certain good people who call *that* worship. You subscribe to no articles—if your mind wanders, it is no crime in you who do not give credit to these infusions of the spirit. They sit in a temple, you sit as in a room adjoining, only do not disturb their pious work with gabbling, nor your own necessary peace with heart-burnings at your not ill-meaning parents, nor a silly contempt of the work which is going on before you. I know that if my parents were to live again, I would do more things to please them than merely sitting still six hours in a week. Perhaps I enlarge too much on this affair, but indeed your objection seems to me ridiculous, and involving in it a principle of frivolous and vexatious resistance.

"You have often borne with my freedoms, bear with me once more in this. If I did not love you, I should not trouble myself whether

you went to meeting or not—whether you conform'd or not [to] the will of your father.

"I am now called off to dinner before one o'clock; being a holyday we dine early, for Mary and me to have a long walk afterwards. My kindest remembrance to Charles.[1]

"God give him all joy and quiet.

"Mary sends her LOVE.

"C. L."

Lamb's next communication to Robert—the first to bear a date—seems to have been added as a postscript to a letter to another member of the family at Birmingham, probably Charles, at home on a visit. And with it we come at length to something more in the true manner of the nimble, playful wit and deep-seeing critic who is known to the world as Elia. Only

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[1] The message to Charles reminds us that Lamb was occasionally seeing and hearing from his old associate. To Southey he wrote in October: "I have had a letter from Lloyd. The young metaphysician of Caius is well, and is busy recanting the new heresy, metaphysics, for the old dogma, Greek." And again, in November: "I am going to meet Lloyd at Ware on Saturday, to return on Sunday. Have you any commands or commendations to the metaphysician?"

Elia could have written this spirited pæan of the joy of living.

"Now 'tis Robert's turn.

"My dear Robert,—One passage in your Letter a little displeas'd me. The rest was nothing but kindness, which Robert's letters are ever brimful of. You say that 'this World to you seems drain'd of all its sweets!' At first I had hoped you only meant to insinuate the high price of Sugar! but I am afraid you meant more. O Robert, I don't know what you call sweet. Honey and the honeycomb, roses and violets, are yet in the earth. The sun and moon yet reign in Heaven, and the lesser lights keep up their pretty twinklings. Meats and drinks, sweet sights and sweet smells, a country walk, spring and autumn, follies and repentance, quarrels and reconcilements, have all a sweetness by turns. Good humour and good nature, friends at home that love you, and friends abroad that miss you, you possess all these things, and more innumerable, and these are all sweet things. . . . You may extract honey from everything; do not go a gathering after gall. The Bees are wiser in their generation

than the race of sonnet writers and complainers, Bowles's and Charlotte Smiths, and all that tribe, who can see no joys but what are past, and fill people's heads with notions of the unsatisfying nature of Earthly comforts. I assure you I find this world a very pretty place. My kind love to all your Sisters and to Thomas—he never writes to me—and tell Susanna I forgive her.

"C. LAMB.

"London, the 13th November, 1798."

The concluding message suggests that Lamb was on a footing of some intimacy with others of the Lloyd family. Thomas was Robert's younger brother, the next to him in age; Susanna was probably Susanna Whitehead, whom Thomas afterwards married.

A week later Lamb hints at a letter which apparently has been lost, and sends the first draft of his dramatic fragment, "The Witch." The letter is undated, but the postmark gives November 20, 1798:—

"As the little copy of verses I sent gave Priscilla and Robert some pleasure, I now send them another little tale, which is all I can send,

for my stock will be exhausted. . . . 'Tis a tale of witchcraft, told by an old Steward in the family to Margaret, the ward of Sir Walter Woodvil. *Who* Sir Walter is you may come to know bye and bye, when I have finish'd a Poem, from which this and the other are extracts, and all the extracts I can make without mutilating:—

*Old Steward.* One summer night Sir Walter, as it chanc'd,
Was pacing to and fro in the avenue
That westward fronts our house,
Among those aged oaks said to have been planted
Three hundred years ago
By a neighb'ring Prior of the Woodvil name;
But so it was,
Being o'er task'd in thought he heeded not
The importune suit of one who stood by the gate,
And begg'd an alms.
Some say, he shov'd her rudely from the gate
With angry chiding; but I can never think,
(Sir Walter's nature hath a sweetness in it,)
That he could treat a woman, an old woman,
With such discourtesy,
For old she was who begg'd an alms of him.
Well, he refus'd her.
(Whether for importunity I know not,
Or that she came between his meditations,)
But better had he met a Lion in the Streets,

Than this old woman that night,
For she was one who practis'd the black arts,
And serv'd the Devil, being since burnt for witchcraft.
She look'd at him like one that meant to blast him
And with a frightful noise,
('Twas partly like a woman's voice,
And partly like the hissing of a snake,)
She nothing spake but this: Sir Walter told the words.

> "A mischief, mischief, mischief,
> And a nine times killing curse,
> By day and by night, to the caitive wight,
> Who shakes the poor, like snakes, from his door,
> And shuts up the womb of his purse:
> And a mischief, mischief, mischief,
> And a ninefold with'ring curse—
> For that shall come to thee that will undo thee,
> Both all that thou fear'st and worst."

These words four times repeated, she departed
Leaving Sir Walter like a man, beneath
Whose feet a scaffolding had suddenly fall'n.

*Margaret.* A terrible curse!

*Old Steward.* O Lady! such bad things are said of that old woman,
You would be loth to hear them!
As, namely, that the milk she gave was sour,
And the babe, who suck'd her, shrivell'd like a mandrake[1]

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[1] "A *mandrake* is a root resembling the human form, as sometimes a carrot does, and the old superstition is, that when the mandrake is torn out of the earth a dreadful shriek is heard, which makes all who hear it go mad. 'Tis a fatal poison besides."

And things besides, with a bigger horror in them,
Almost, I think, unlawful to be told!

*Margaret.* Then I must never hear them. But proceed,
And say what follow'd on the witch's curse.

*Old Steward.* Nothing immediate; but some nine months after
Young Stephen Woodvil suddenly fell sick,
And none could tell what ail'd him; for he lay,
And pin'd, and pin'd, till all his hair came off,
And he, that was full flesh'd, became as thin
As a two months' babe that has been starv'd in the nursing.
And sure, I think,
He bore his illness like a little child,
With such rare sweetness, and dumb melancholy,
He strove to clothe his agony in smiles,
Which he would force up in his poor pale cheeks,
Like ill-tim'd guests that had no proper dwelling there.
And, when they ask'd him his complaint, he laid
His hand upon his heart to show the place
Where Susan came to him a nights, he said,
And prick'd him with a pin.
And thereupon Sir Walter call'd to mind
The beggar witch who stood in the gateway,
And begg'd an alms.

*Margaret.* And so he died?

*Old Steward.* 'Tis thought so.

*Margaret.* But did the witch confess?

*Old Steward.* All this and more at her death.

*Margaret.* I do not love to credit tales of magic.
Heav'n's music, which is order, seems unstrung,
And this brave world,
Creation's beauteous workmanship, unbeautify'd,
Disorder'd, marr'd, where such strange things are acted.

"I will here conclude my tiny portion of Prose with hoping you may like the story, and my kind remembrances to all.

"C. LAMB.

"Write soon, Robert."

Lamb afterwards changed his mind about this passage, which was not incorporated in "John Woodvil," but stands alone in his works, an independence emphasised by the alteration of the name of Woodvil to Fairford. A comparison of the poem as it stands, with its form as Robert and Priscilla Lloyd first knew it, illustrates the nicety of its author's artistic conscience.[1]

[1] To Southey Lamb wrote more than once on the subject of "The Witch." His letter of November, 1798 ("Letters," i. p. 97) makes it clear that Charles Lloyd's opinion also was asked. Thus: "Lloyd objects to 'shutting up the womb of his purse,' in my curse (which, for a Christian witch in a Christian country, is not too mild, I hope). Do you object? I think there is a strangeness in the idea, as well as

And here a word as to Robert's sister Priscilla. Priscilla Lloyd, Mr. Lloyd's sixth child, was at this time—the autumn of 1798—just seventeen. Her future husband, Christopher Wordsworth, the brother of the poet,—who was introduced to the family by Charles Lloyd, his pupil at Cambridge,—thus describes her in a letter belonging to the period: "My Priscilla is now a little more than seventeen, not under the middle size of women, not slender, not handsome, but what at times you would, I think, call a fine woman." According to Charles she was like Mrs. Siddons. In due course we shall reach Priscilla's marriage; but as this chapter has already touched upon Quaker revolt, it might here be remarked that subsequently she became the mother of Charles Wordsworth, Bishop of St. Andrews, and Christopher Wordsworth, Bishop of Lincoln, and the grandmother

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'shaking the poor like snakes from his door,' which suits the speaker. Witches illustrate, as fine ladies do, from their own familiar objects, and snakes and the shutting-up of wombs are in their way. I don't know that this last charge has been before brought against 'em, nor either the sour milk or the mandrake babe; but I affirm these be things a witch would do if she could." The postscript to this letter is amusing: "When you write to Lloyd, he wishes his Jacobin correspondents to address him as Mr. C. L."

of John Wordsworth, Bishop of Salisbury—no bad achievement for a Quaker's daughter.

To 1798 belong no more letters, but early in the new year—on January 21, 1799—Lamb, writing to Southey, spoke of a startling occurrence, which was destined to bring Robert Lloyd nearer to him than any correspondence could:—"I am requested by [Charles] Lloyd to excuse his not replying to a kind letter received from you. He is at present situated in most distressful family perplexities, which I am not at liberty to explain, but they are such as to demand all the strength of his mind, and quite exclude any attention to foreign objects. His brother Robert (the flower of his family) hath eloped from the persecutions of his father, and has taken shelter with me. What the issue of his adventure will be I know not. He hath the sweetness of an angel in his heart, combined with admirable firmness of purpose, an uncultivated, but very original, and I think superior, genius."

Precisely what Lamb meant by the word "persecutions," or whether he meant it at all, but wished merely to suggest Robert's own view of the matter, we shall never know. In

those letters from Mr. Lloyd to his son which have been preserved there certainly is nothing to which the word could apply. This, for example, is a fair specimen of the paternal reasoning:—"I am sometimes concerned to hear that thou givest way to uncomfortable feelings and repinest at thy situation. Have a little patience, my dear Son, and thou wilt have reason to rejoice that thou passedst the days of thy youth in such a quiet, retired situation. 'It is good for a man to bear the yoke in his youth,' and I am persuaded Charles and James would in many respects have received great advantages had they been apprenticed out in steady families."

Yet the fact remains that Robert fled. It may, however, have been less because he found Birmingham unbearable than London irresistible. He went straight to the sympathetic Lamb, and with him or near him remained for some months. Writing on May 20, Lamb gave Southey a further account of the embroilment and his own mischievous pleasure therein:—"Lloyd will now be able to give you an account of himself, so to him I leave you for satisfaction. Great part of his

troubles are lightened by the partial recovery of his sister, who had been alarmingly ill with similar diseases to his own. The other part of the family troubles sleeps for the present, but I fear will awake at some future time to confound and disunite. He will probably tell you all about it. Robert still continues here with me; his father has proposed nothing, but would willingly lure him back with fair professions. But Robert is endowed with a wise fortitude, and in this business has acted quite from himself, and wisely acted. His parents must come forward in the end. I like reducing parents to a sense of undutifulness. I like confounding the relations of life." [1]

What happened at Birmingham after Robert's elopement, or what he did in London, or how Lamb extricated himself—as assuredly he did—from such an embarrassing position as aider and abettor of an unfilial rebel, is not known.

After Lamb's reports to Southey our next glimpse of Robert is in a letter from Priscilla in June of the same year, in which he is ad-

[1] From a letter (printed in full in Mr. W. C. Hazlitt's work, "The Lambs"), a portion only of which is used by Canon Ainger, in Lamb's "Letters."

dressed at Bath. His sister entered with gentle reasonableness into his difficulties, sympathising with his objections to business and suggesting possible solutions. She wrote : " Lamb would not I think by any means be a person to take up your abode with. He is too much like yourself—he would encourage those feelings which it certainly is your duty to suppress. Your station in life—the duties which are pointed out by that rank in society which you are destined to fulfil—differ widely from his. . . . Charles," Priscilla added, " wishes you to call on Southey at Bristol frequently."

# VII

## THOMAS MANNING AND ROBERT LLOYD

### 1799–1800

On returning to Birmingham, the storm having subsided, Robert found a new friend. This was Thomas Manning, destined afterwards to inspire some of Lamb's best letters, and therefore some of the best letters in the world, who was then spending a portion of the long vacation with Charles Lloyd, one of his mathematical pupils at Caius. Manning, at that time a man of twenty-seven, was attracted to Robert Lloyd much as Lamb had been, and from a little bundle of eight letters [1] written to him by Robert Lloyd in the autumn of 1799 and spring of 1800, we may conclude that Robert found in him the ideal confidant for whom he had been seeking. He seems just then to have needed a friend more poignantly

[1] Now in the possession of Canon Manning, with whose kind permission quotations are made here.

than at any period of his life, and Manning gave him true help. These letters, which it is not profitable to quote entire, are filled with gratitude to a wise and kindly counsellor. "To you," Robert says in one, "I fear to tell nothing. Lamb is a different cast, he understands not the complex winding of character, so that I keep from him what if I told would give him notions that he could never make meet [word partly illegible]."

In September Robert visited his uncle, Nehemiah Lloyd, at Worcester, and soon afterwards came the following incomplete letter from Lamb:—

"My dear Robert,—I suppose by this time you have returned from Worcester with Uncle Nehemiah. You neglected to inform me whether Charles is yet at Birm. I have heard here that he is returned to Cambridge. Give him a gentle tap on the shoulder to remind him how truly acceptable a letter from him would be. I have nothing to write about.

"Thomson remains with me. He is perpetually getting into mental vagaries. He is in LOVE! and tosses and tumbles about in his

bed like a man in a barrel of spikes. He is more sociable, but I am heartily sick of his domesticating with me; he wants so many sympathies of mine, and I want his, that we are daily declining into *civility*. I shall be truly glad when he is gone. I find 'tis a dangerous experiment to grow too familiar. Some natures cannot bear it without converting into indifference. I know but one Being that I could ever consent to live perpetually with, and that is Robert. But Robert must go whither prudence and paternal regulations indicate a way. I shall not soon forget you—do not fear that—nor grow cool towards Robert. My not writing is no proof of these disloyalties. Perhaps I am unwell, or vexed, or spleen'd, or something, when I should otherwise write.

" Assure Charles of my unalterable affection, and present my warmest wishes for his and Sophia's happiness. How goes on Priscilla? I am much pleased with his Poems in the Anthology—One in Particular. The other is a kind and no doubt just tribute to Robert and Olivia, but I incline to opinion that these domestic addresses should not always be made public. I have, I know, more than once ex-

posed my own secretest feelings of that nature, but I am sorry that I did. Nine out of ten readers laugh at them. When a man dies leaving the name of a great author behind him, any unpublished relicks which let one into his domestic retirements are greedily gathered up, which in his lifetime, and before his fame had ripened, would by many be considered as impertinent. But if Robert and his sister were gratify'd with seeing their brother's heart in Print, let the rest of the world go hang. They may prefer the remaining trumpery of the Anthology. All I mean to say is, I think I perceive an indelicacy in thus exposing one's virtuous feelings to criticism. But of delicacy Charles is at least as true a judge as myself.

"Pray request him to let me somehow have a sight of his novel. I declined offering it here for sale, for good reasons as I thought—being unknown to Booksellers, and not made for making bargains; but for that reason I am not to be punished with not seeing the book.

"I shall count it a kindness if Chas. will send me the manuscript, which shall certainly be returned. [The remainder of this letter has been torn off.]"

The Thomson referred to was a Cambridge curate. The allusion to Charles Lloyd a little later is our first intimation of his intended marriage. Sophia was Sophia Pemberton, of Birmingham, to whom he was united very shortly after Lamb's congratulations. According to De Quincey, Miss Pemberton's parents were so averse from the match that Lloyd secured the assistance of Southey to carry her off. That, however, probably was not so. One cannot quite see Southey thus engaged. Although married, Charles Lloyd did not leave Cambridge for some months.

To return to Lamb's letter, the Anthology was the "Annual Anthology" which Southey had been busily preparing for Cottle during the preceding year. As a matter of fact, Charles Lloyd was represented by four contributions: the "Lines to a Brother and Sister" (Robert and Olivia), to which Lamb took exception; some blank verse "To a Young Man who considered the perfection of human nature as consisting in the vigour and indulgence of the more boisterous passions," and sonnets to a Woodpecker and the Sabbath. Lamb's interesting comments upon taste, which are as per-

tinent to-day as they were when written, form the first piece of literary criticism in his letters to Robert Lloyd. Charles Lloyd's novel, to which Lamb refers, was "Edmund Oliver," published in 1798, more than a year before. Considering that that ill-starred work was dedicated to him, it is particularly odd that Lamb should not have yet seen a copy. But in its author's hypersensitiveness the reason is probably to be sought.

Lamb and Manning first met late in 1799, during a visit paid by Lamb to Charles Lloyd. In all likelihood the time was early December. Indeed, a letter from Mr. Lloyd to his sons Robert and Thomas, written in London on the fifth of that month, has a passage—"I took Priscilla and Rachel to the India House, but C. Lamb was gone to Cambridge"—which, when taken into association with Lamb's first letter to Manning, dated December, may be said to settle the point. This bringing together of two such complementary natures as Lamb and Manning was Charles Lloyd's most conspicuous achievement. Had he not done so, by how much good fun and good sense should we be the poorer!—for Lamb was never in

better pin than in his letters to the mathematician-traveller. It was Manning who gave him the Chinese story on which the "Dissertation on Roast Pig" pivots. "He is a man of a thousand," Lamb wrote to Coleridge a week after making this new friend, the reconciliation with Coleridge having been completed almost at the same time that Manning entered Lamb's life. Truly a notable December.

In another of Mr. Lloyd's letters during his sojourn in town he wrote: "C. Lamb dined here a few days ago, and is to breakfast here on 5th day." Lamb's next letter to Robert gave some account of the banker's hospitality:—

"Dear Rob,—Thy presents will be most acceptable whenever they come, both for thy sake and for the liquor, which is a beverage I most admire. Wine makes me hot, and brandy makes me drunk, but porter warms without intoxication; and elevates, yet not too much above the point of tranquillity. But I hope Robert will come himself before the tap is out. He may be assured that his good honest company is the most valuable present, after all, he can make us. These cold nights crave some-

thing beside Porter—good English mirth and heart's ease. Rob must contrive to pass some of his Christmas with us, or at least drink in the century with a welcome.

"I have not seen your father or Priscilla since. Your father was in one of his best humours (I have seldom seen him in one not good), and after dinner, while we were sitting comfortably before the parlour fire, after our wine, he beckoned me suddenly out of the room. I, expecting some secrets, followed him, but it was only to go and sit with him in the old forsaken compting house, which he declared to be the pleasantest spot in the house to him, and told me how much business used to be done there in former days. Your father whimsically mixes the good man and the man of business in his manners, but he is not less a good man for being a man of business. He has conceived great hopes of thy one day uniting both characters, and I joyfully expect the same.

"I hope to see Priscilla, for the first time, some day the end of this week, but think it at least dubious, as she stays in town but one day, I think your father said.

"I wonder Rob could think I should take his presents in evil part. I am sure from him they are the genuine result of a sincere friendship, not immediately knowing how better to express itself. I shall enjoy them with tenfold gust, as being his presents. At the same time, I must remind him that such expressions, if too thickly repeated, would be in danger of proving oppressive.

"I am not fond of presents all on one side, and Rob knows that I have little to present to him, except the assurances of an undiminished and an undiminishable friendship. Rob will take as a hint what his friend does not mean as an affront. I hope our friendship will stand firm, without the help of scaffolding.

"At the same time I am determined to enjoy Robert's present, and to drink his health in his own porter, and I hope he will be able to partake with us. Bread and cheese and a hearty sympathy may prove no bad supplement to Robert's good old English beverage. Charles has not written to me since I saw him. I trust he goes on as comfortably as I witness'd. No husband and wife can be happier than Sophia and your Brother appear to be in each other's

company.[1] Robert must marry next; I look to see him get the start of Wordsworth and Priscilla, whom *yet* I wish to see united.

"Farewell, dearest Rob,

"C. L.

"Mary joins with me in remembrances to Robert, and in expectation of the coming beverage.

"Do you think you shall be able to come?

"Monday night, just Porter time.

"December 17, 1799."

The counting-house to which Lamb was taken by his host was David Barclay's, where Mr. Lloyd had learned banking as a youth.

Robert does not seem to have been able to accept Lamb's invitation and fare to town; but Manning did, and there, under Lamb's roof,

[1] Lamb seems to have been much attracted by Sophia Lloyd. His letters to Manning at this time have several references to her. In one he sends the young couple his "dearest love and remembrances;" in another—March 17, 1800, he indulges in a little affectionate exaggeration: "My dear love to Lloyd and Sophia, and pray split this thin letter into three parts, and present them with the *two biggest* in my name. They are my oldest friends; but, ever the new friend driveth out the old, as the ballad sings. God bless you all three! I would hear from Lloyd if I could."

he met Coleridge. Writing to Manning in February, 1800, Robert said: "I find you have been in London. I doubt not but you spent your time very happily when at Lamb's. He sometimes, indeed often, writes to me. I prize his letters as I do yours, and I long to have more of yours to look at. I value them more than books, or any other writings—I quite nurse them up. Do write to me shortly, anything from you will prove abundantly acceptable." We may gather that Manning replied at once, although his letter is undated:—

"Sunday.

"My very dear Friend,—I have been too negligent of you. I ought to have written before, yet for all that I shall stand excused before you. If I tell you that my negligence has not proceeded from any waning of love, or any unkind impressions, you will believe me. You'll acquit me of all the important part of the charge, and the rest your love will excuse and pardon—for *you* know me. I am proud, Robert, to be known and beloved by you.

"There are men here, very good men, who do not rightly appreciate my mind and dispo-

sition; they see something reserv'd in me, and imagine me to be designing in some measure. I thought I had discovered an instance of it just before your letter came. I felt a little damp upon my spirits, and you cannot think how consoling were the assurances you give me of your love and esteem. As I could not bear to think of your being alienated from me, so the assurance (just at that time) of your being still my own, was reviving to my spirit.

"I was indeed very happy at Lamb's; I abode there but three days. He is very good. I wish you and He and myself were now sitting over a bowl of punch, or a tankard of porter. We often talked of You, and were perfectly agreed; but I won't tell you what we agreed to about you, lest you should hold up your head too high. You'll be sufficiently vain, I doubt not, Master Robert, at having been made the subject of conversation between such great men as *Lamb* and *I* (*are likely to be*). I was introduced to Coleridge, which was a great gratification to me. I think him a man of very splendid abilities and animated feelings. But let me whisper a word in your ear, Robert,—twenty Coleridges could not supply your loss to

me, if you were to forsake me. So if any *friendly interposer* should come and tell you I am not what I seem, and warn you against my friendship, beware of listening to him. Let no *surmises* weigh against the decisions derived from our personal intercourse—but I have no fears, I write this with the levity of perfect confidence. It is *a* [kind of] boasting; you may truly set it down as one of the marks of my love and friendship.

"Is there any chance of my seeing you here, Robert? I shall stay in Cambridge almost uninterruptedly till this time twelvemonth, perhaps longer; and during that time I hope you'll be *necessitated* to visit this place.

"Charles and Sophia (God bless them!) are both well; they have not heard from Priscilla for a long time—say in your next how she does. Remember me very kindly to all your Family.

"Farewell—write soon and believe me,

"Your very affectionate Friend,

"THOMAS MANNING."

We may suppose, from Robert's reply, that this was just the type of encouraging letter of

which he was in need. "Your kind letter," he wrote, "quite raised me from the ground. . . . I feel more attached to my family," he said later, "and"—here we see the fruit of Lamb's admonishings—"I fully intend going to the Quakers' meeting again. Not that my father has spoken to me of it, for he behaves in the most noble manner to me, but I can no longer withstand his affectionate solicitude without showing some free gift, something which will give him great pleasure and which is his right—my sitting two hours on a Sunday under the same roof in silence" One more quotation: "Every pleasure of my life is derived from my friends, and without them the most exquisite apparent delight would be fruitless and barren. They are like comfortable warm huts in a wilderness of misery, where the soul may rest from its toils and slumber in the dreams of serenity and freshening peace." Lamb, we now perceive, was shrewdly advised in telling Robert that he must be the next to marry. No young man was ever riper for love.

Lamb's name crops up at the same time in a letter from Mrs. Lloyd to Robert, written in London, where she was staying with her second

daughter, Olivia. The date is March 1—that is to say, "Third Month" 1st—1800, and Mrs. Lloyd, having a busy visiting season before her, remarks: "If C. Lamb pays his respects I wish it might be some morning at Breakfast. . . . I hardly think we shall have one vacant day." A fortnight later Lamb, writing to Manning, gave an account of his call: "Tell Charles I have seen his mamma, and have almost fallen in love with *her*, since I mayn't with Olivia. She is so fine and graceful, a complete matron-lady-quaker. She has given me two little books. Olivia grows a charming girl—full of feeling, and thinner than she was; but I have not time to fall in love."

With the following letter, which belongs to the spring or summer of 1800, Thomas Manning passes from the correspondence, as we now possess it:—

"Dear Robert,—You need never apologise for writing such letters as your last; you there express yourself in a manner that would interest and charm even a stranger to you. Your animal frame seems to vibrate to every Breeze that passes over it, in all the varieties of

interwoven harmony. You are 'tremblingly alive all o'er.' God forbid that you should ever lose the delicacy of your sensibility. God forbid that the rude, harsh gusts of life should ever sweep over your soul without eliciting discordant emotions. But I hope the time will come when your frame will lose *some* of its present *morbid* aptitude to vibrate—when your mind will become stronger and more fixed. You must not despair of seeing many happy days yet. You will have many bright gleams of exquisite lustre in this the morning of your life, and the afternoon will be a settled sunshine, in which you will enjoy more real happiness than many, who are less prone to sensation, ever experience in all the vigour of their blood.

"I often picture to myself a contingency, which most likely never will take place, but yet may, and which I contemplate with a strange fondness and delight. 'Tis of you and myself travelling together abroad—in the South of France, or in Italy, or in Switzerland, or in some part of Spain. *Your* susceptibility and *my* mathematical caution combined would form an excellent travelling temperament, I

think. If there was peace over Europe, and you and I had each of us independent fortunes, I am sure I should propose it to you. I should like to know whether this idea pleases you as it does me, but I should guess not, for which I could give most sage reasons; and if I guessed wrong, I could give most sage reasons again, to account for the erroneousness of my former reasons. In short, IF *I should guess*, it would be guessing. Your brother Plumstead is coming to-day with Wordsworth to dine with me. The little I saw of him, when he passed through Cambridge before, had given me a very inadequate idea of him—indeed, I was just then *untuned* to everything new. I now find the resemblance between him and Charles and you much stronger than I imagined, both in person and manner. He reminds me of *you* perpetually, and indeed, Robert, he is not therefore the less welcome! In truth, I shall be sorry to part with him—he revives a train of ideas in my mind which I would not break off willingly.

"Farewell, my dear, my very dear

"Friend—yr.

"Truly, T. M."

The suggested tour was never accomplished, although Manning himself left England for France two years later in order to study Chinese against his intended travels in China. Of his adventures in China and in Thibet this is not the place to tell.

# VIII

## CHARLES LAMB AS CRITIC

### 1800–1801

LAMB's next letter to Robert Lloyd was dated July 2, 1800:—

"DEAR ROBERT,—My mind has been so barren and idle of late, that I have done nothing. I have received many a summons from you, and have repeatedly sat down to write, and broke off from despair of sending you anything worthy your acceptance. I have had such a deadness about me. Man delights not me nor woman neither. I impute it in part, or altogether, to the stupefying effect which continued fine weather has upon me. I want some rains, or even snow and intense cold winter nights, to bind me to my habitation, and make me value it as a home—a sacred character which it has not attained with me hitherto. I cannot read or write when the sun shines: I can only walk.

"I must tell you that, since I wrote last I

have been two days at Oxford on a visit (long put off) to Gutch's family (my landlord). I was much gratified with the Colleges and Libraries and what else of Oxford I could see in so short a time. In the All Souls' Library is a fine head of Bishop Taylor, which was one great inducement to my Oxford visit. In the Bodleian are many Portraits of illustrious Dead, the only species of painting I value at a farthing. But an indubitable good Portrait of a great man is worth a pilgrimage to go and see. Gutch's family is a very fine one, consisting of well-grown sons and daughters, and all likely and well-favour'd. What is called a Happy family —that is, according to my interpretation, a numerous assemblage of young men and women, all fond of each other to a certain degree, and all happy together, but where the very number forbids any two of them to get close enough to each other to share secrets and *be friends*. That close intercourse can only exist (commonly, I think,) in a family of two or three. I do not envy large families. The fraternal affection by diffusion and multi-participation is ordinarily thin and weak. They don't get near enough to each other.

"I expected to have had an account of Sophia's being brought to bed before this time; but I remain in confidence that you will send me the earliest news. I hope it will be happy.

"Coleridge is settled at Keswick, so that the probability is that he will be once again united with your Brother. Such men as he and Wordsworth would exclude solitude in the Hebrides or Thule.

"Pray have you seen the New Edition of Burns, including his posthumous works? I want very much to get a sight of it, but cannot afford to buy it, my Oxford Journey, though very moderate, having pared away all superfluities.

"Will you accept of this short letter, accompanied with professions of deepest regard for you?

"Yours unalterably,

"C. LAMB."[1]

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[1] It may have been during this visit to Oxford that Lamb met his "Gentle Giantess"—the widow Blacket, "the largest female he ever had the pleasure of beholding." "With more than man's bulk [wrote Elia], her humours and occupations are eminently feminine. She sighs,—being six foot high. She languisheth,—being two feet wide. She worketh slender sprigs upon the delicate muslin,—her fingers being capable of moulding a Colossus. She sippeth her wine

Gutch, by the way, was more than Lamb's landlord; he was his old schoolfellow at Christ's Hospital. At this period Lamb and his sister occupied rooms in Gutch's house in Southampton Buildings, Chancery Lane.

The reference to Sophia Lloyd, then living with her husband at Olton Green, Mr. Lloyd's farm, near Birmingham, previous to their departure for Ambleside, needs no explanation. Her expectancy was realised a few weeks later, when she gave birth to a boy, whom they named Grosvenor. Lamb wrote thus to Manning on the subject: "I suppose you have heard of Sophia Lloyd's good fortune, and paid the customary compliments to the parents. Heaven keep the new-born infant from star blasting and moon blasting, from epilepsy, marasmus, and the devil! May he live to see many days, and they good ones; some friends,

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out of her glass daintily,—her capacity being that of a tun of Heidelberg. She goeth mincingly with those feet of her's, whose solidity need not fear the black ox's pressure. Softest and largest of thy sex, adieu! By what parting attribute may I salute thee, last and best of the Titanesses,—Ogress, fed with milk instead of blood; not least, or least handsome, among Oxford's stately structures,—Oxford, who, in its deadest time of vacation, can never properly be said to be empty, having thee to fill it."

and they *pretty regular correspondents!* with as much wit and wisdom as will eat their bread and cheese together under a poor roof without quarrelling! as much goodness as will earn heaven. Here I must leave off, my benedictory powers failing me."

Lamb's prediction concerning Coleridge and a reconciliation was not immediately realised. Earlier in the year Coleridge had assured Southey that he would not reopen intercourse with Charles Lloyd; and later, in December, when the Lloyds had settled at Ambleside, we find him writing to Poole that though his old pupil is a neighbour, he "shall not see him." By degrees, however, he was persuaded, possibly through the influence of Dorothy Wordsworth, to be again friendly, and there is a record of Coleridge spending a night at Old Brathay, whither Charles Lloyd moved from Ambleside, in the summer of 1802.

Of Lloyd's intimacy with Wordsworth we have a hint in a letter from Lamb to Coleridge, written in August, 1800, wherein he alludes to Wordsworth's tragedy "The Borderers," and his desire to see it. "Manning has read it," he adds, "so has Lloyd, and all Lloyd's family;

but I could not get him to betray his trust by giving *me* a sight of it. Lloyd is sadly deficient in some of those virtuous vices."

In a letter to Manning, in October, 1800, Lamb wrote:—"Robert Lloyd is come to town. Priscilla meditates going to see 'Pizarro' at Drury Lane to-night (from her uncle's), under cover of coming to dine with me . . . *heu tempora! heu mores!*—I have barely time to finish, as I expect her and Robin every minute." An account of these London experiences, sent by Robert to his father, contains, it is amusing to note, no mention of the play. "My dear Parents," he said, "Priscilla wrote you word of my arrival here. I am well, and so is my sister. At present I have been in Tower Street, with a few digressions to my friend Lamb. Next second day I shall call on R. Barclay. I intend going with Priscilla to Captain Bevan's; he spoke very kindly to me at Gracechurch meeting to-day."

In the following month we find Lamb telling Manning of an invitation from Charles Lloyd to spend a month at Ambleside, which he was disposed to accept. As it happened, however, he was unable to do so. Not until

the summer of 1802, when they knocked unexpectedly at Coleridge's door, did Charles and Mary Lamb see the Lakes.

Lamb's next letter to Robert was a piece of the true Elia, enshrining eulogies of two of his loves—Izaak Walton and London. Thus:—

"DEAR ROBERT,—I shall expect you to bring me a brimful account of the pleasure which Walton has given you, when you come to town. It must square with your mind. The delightful innocence and healthfulness of the Angler's mind will have blown upon yours like a Zephyr. Don't you already feel your spirit *filled* with the scenes?—the banks of rivers—the cowslip beds—the pastoral scenes—the neat alehouses—and hostesses and milkmaids, as far exceeding Virgil and Pope, as the 'Holy Living' is beyond Thomas à Kempis. Are not the eating and drinking joys painted to the Life? Do they not inspire you with an immortal hunger? Are not you ambitious of being made an Angler? What edition have you got? Is it Hawkins's, with plates of Piscator, &c.? That sells very dear. I have only been able to purchase the last edition without the old Plates

which pleased my childhood; the plates being worn out, and the old Edition difficult and expensive to procure. The 'Complete Angler' is the only Treatise written in Dialogues that is worth a halfpenny. Many elegant dialogues have been written (such as Bishop Berkeley's 'Minute Philosopher'), but in all of them the Interlocutors are merely abstract arguments personify'd; not living dramatic characters, as in Walton, where *every thing* is *alive;* the fishes are absolutely *charactered;* and birds and animals are as interesting as men and women.[1]

[1] Here might be placed a few sentences from a eulogy of Izaak Walton by the late Mr. T. E. Brown (which was printed in the *National Observer* of October 14, 1893) as being curiously worthy of standing beside Lamb's praise:—

"The book is as full of delights as a meadow of cowslips. Who can forget the tenderness and gentle reverence with which Walton speaks of 'old Oliver Henley' ('now with God')? The otter hunt —what brilliance of atmosphere! what life! The dogs are Ringwood, Kilbuck, Sweetlips. Ringwood does the business. And the Fishing proper begins, as reason would have it, with a chubb. Viator has a try for a chubb. The directions for dressing this chubb are like a passage from Leviticus.

"And then they aspire to trout. I suppose the meeting with the milkmaid, and the account of the supper that follows, can hardly be paralleled in our literature.

"The frog-bait, though, is the *locus classicus*. Good, kind old soul was Walton; but could you have trusted him with a baby, for instance, if some one had told him that a bit of a baby was a capital bait for barbel?"

"I need not be at much pains to get the 'Holy Livings.' We can procure them in ten minutes' search at any stall or shop in London. By your engaging one for Priscilla, it should seem *she* will be in Town—is that the case? I thought she was fix'd at the Lakes.

"I perfectly understand the nature of your solitarines at Birm., and wish I could divide myself, 'like a bribed haunch,' between London and it.[1] But courage! you will soon be emancipated, and (it may be) have a frequent power of visiting this great place. Let them talk of lakes and mountains and romantic dales—all that fantastic stuff; give me a ramble by night, in the winter nights in London—the Lamps lit—the pavements of the motley Strand crowded with to and fro passengers—the shops all brilliant, and stuffed with obliging customers and obliged tradesmen—give me the old bookstalls of London—a walk in the bright Piazzas of Covent Garden. I defy a man to be dull in such places—perfect Mahometan paradises upon earth! I have lent out my heart with

[1] Lamb was remembering, not quite distinctly, Falstaff's remark to Mistress Ford (*The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Act v., scene 5): "Divide me like a bribe buck, each a haunch."

usury to such scenes from my childhood up, and have cried with fulness of joy at the multitudinous scenes of Life in the crowded streets of ever dear London. I wish you could fix here. I don't know if you quite comprehend my low Urban Taste; but depend upon it that a man of any feeling will have given his heart and his love in childhood and in boyhood to any scenes where he has been bred, as well to dirty streets (and smoky walls as they are called) as to green lanes, 'where live nibbling sheep,' and to the everlasting hills and the Lakes and ocean. A mob of men is better than a flock of sheep, and a crowd of happy faces justling into the playhouse at the hour of six is a more beautiful spectacle to man than the shepherd driving his 'silly' sheep to fold. Come to London and learn to sympathise with my unrural notions.[1]

[1] Lamb's "Letters" contain three variations upon this theme. To Manning he wrote (November 28, 1800):—"Streets, streets, streets, markets, theatres, churches, Covent Gardens, shops sparkling with pretty faces of industrious milliners, neat sempstresses, ladies cheapening, gentlemen behind counters lying, authors in the street with spectacles, George Dyers (you may know them by their gait), lamps lit at night, pastry-cooks' and silversmiths' shops, beautiful Quakers of Pentonville, noise of coaches, drowsy cry of mechanic watchmen at night, with bucks reeling home drunk; if you happen to wake at midnight, cries of 'Fire!' and 'Stop thief!'; inns of court, with

"Wordsworth has published a second vol.—'Lyrical Ballads.' Most of them very good, but not so good as first vol. What more can I tell you? I believe I told you I have been to see *Manning*. He is a dainty chiel.—A man of great Power—an enchanter almost.—Far beyond Coleridge or any man in power

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their learned air, and halls and butteries, just like Cambridge colleges; old bookstalls, 'Jeremy Taylors,' 'Burtons on Melancholy', and 'Religio Medicis,' on every stall. These are thy pleasures, O London! with thy many sins." To Wordsworth—January 30, 1801—Lamb wrote to much the same effect, but less piquantly: "The wonder of these sights," he remarked at the end of the catalogue, "impels me into night walks about her crowded streets, and I often shed tears in the motley Strand from fulness of joy at so much life." And again to Manning, at about the time of the letter to Robert:—"By my new plan, I shall be as airy, up four pair of stairs, as in the country; and in a garden, in the midst of enchanting (more than Mahometan paradise) London, whose dirtiest drab-frequented alley, and her lowest bowing tradesman I would not exchange for Skiddaw, Helvellyn, James, Walter, and the parson into the bargain. O her lamps of a night! her rich goldsmiths, print-shops, toy-shops, mercers, hardwaremen, pastry-cooks, St. Paul's Churchyard, the Strand, Exeter Change, Charing Cross, with the man *upon* a black horse! Where are thy gods, O London? A'nt you mightily moped on the banks of the Cam? Had you not better come and set up here? You can't think what a difference. All the streets and pavements are pure gold, I warrant you. At least, I know an alchemy that turns her mud into that metal,—a mind that loves to be at home in crowds." Of the four London letters it must be conceded that that to Robert Lloyd is the best.

of impressing—when he gets you alone, he can act the wonders of Egypt. Only he is lazy, and does not always put forth all his strength; if he did, I know no man of genius at all comparable to him.

"Yours as ever,

"C. L.

"February 7, 1801."

It is now that we begin rightly to realise what a truly worthy young man Robert Lloyd was. Lovers of good literature owe him a debt which it would be hard to discharge; firstly, for having extracted precious words from one of the choicest minds on England's roll, and secondly, for having preserved them. Thus did Robert Lloyd incite Charles Lamb to write of Jeremy Taylor:—

"Fletcher's Purple Island is a tedious Allegory of the Parts of the Human Body. I would not advise you to lay out six *pence* upon it. It is not the work of Fletcher, the Coadjutor of Beaumont, but one Phineas, a kinsman of his.

"If by the work of Bishop Taylor, whose

Title you have not given correctly, you mean his CONTEMPLATIONS on the State of Man in this Life and that which is to come, I dare hope you will join with me in believing it to be spurious. The suspicious circumstance of its being a posthumous work, with the total dissimilarity in style to the genuine works, I think evince that it never was the work of DOCTOR JEREMY TAYLOR, Late Lord Bishop of Down and Connor in Ireland, and Administrator of the See of Dromore; such are the titles which his sounding title-pages give him, and I love the man, and I love his paraphernalia, and I like to name him with all his attributions and additions. If you are yet but lightly acquainted with his real manner, take up and read the whole first chapter of the Holy DYING; in particular turn to the first paragraph of the 2 sect. of that chapter for a simile of a rose, or more truly many similes within simile; for such were the riches of his fancy, that when a beauteous image offered, before he could stay to expand it into all its capacities, throngs of new coming images came up, and justled out the first, or blended in disorder with it, which imitates the order of

every rapid mind.[1] But read all of the first chapter by my advice; and I know I need not advise you, when you have read it, to read the second.

"Or for another specimen (where so many beauties crowd, the judgment has yet vanity enough to think it can discern the handsomest, till a second judgment and a third *ad infinitum* start up to disallow their elder brother's pretensions) turn to the Story of the Ephesian Matron in the second section of the 5th chapter of the same Holy Dying[2] (I still refer to the *Dying* part, because it contains better matter

[1] This is the simile of a rose: "It is a mighty change that is made by the death of every person, and it is visible to us who are alive. Reckon but from the sprightfulness of youth, and the fair cheeks and full eyes of childhood, from the vigorousness and strong flexure of the joints of five-and-twenty, to the hollowness and dead paleness, to the loathsomeness and horror, of a three days' burial, and we shall perceive the distance to be very great and very strange. But so I have seen a rose newly springing up from the clefts of its hood, and, at first, it was fair as the morning, and full with the dew of heaven, as a lamb's fleece; but when a ruder breath had forced open its virgin modesty, and dismantled its too youthful and unripe retirements, it began to put on darkness, and to decline to softness and the symptoms of a sickly age; it bowed the head, and broke its stalk; and, at night, having lost some of its leaves and all its beauty, it fell into the portion of weeds and worn-out faces. The same is the portion of every man and every woman."

[2] Lamb was a little in error. The passage is in the eighth section.

than the 'Holy Living,' which deals more in rules than illustrations—I mean in comparison with the other only, else it has more and more beautiful illustrations—than any prose book besides)—read it yourself and show it to Plumstead (with my LOVE, and bid him write to me), and ask him if WILLY himself has ever told a story with more circumstances of FANCY and HUMOUR.

"The paragraph begins, 'But that which is to be faulted,' and the story not long after follows. Make these references while P. is with you, that you may stir him up to the Love of Jeremy Taylor, and make a convertite of him. Coleridge was the man who first solemnly exhorted me to 'study' the works of Dr. Jeremy Taylor, and I have had reason to bless the hour in which he did it. Read as many of his works as you can get. I will assist you in getting them when we go a stall hunting together in London, and it's odds if we don't get a good Beaumt. and Fletcher cheap.

"Bp. Taylor has more and more beautiful imagery, and (what is more to a Lover of Willy) more knowledge and description of human life and manners than any prose book

in the language: he has more delicacy and sweetness than any mortal, the 'gentle' Shakespear hardly excepted,—his similies and allusions are taken, as the bees take honey, from all the youngest, greenest, exquisitest parts of nature, from plants, and flowers, and fruit, young boys and virgins, from little children perpetually, from sucking infants, babies' smiles, roses, gardens,—his imagination was a spacious Garden, where no vile insects could crawl in; his apprehension a 'COURT' where no foul thoughts kept 'leets and holydays.'

> Snail and worm give no offence,
> Newt nor blind worm be not seen,
> Come not near our fairy queen.

You must read Bishop Taylor with allowances for the subjects on which he wrote, and the age *in* which. You may skip or patiently endure his tedious discourses on rites and ceremonies, Baptism, and the Eucharist, the Clerical function, and the antiquity of Episcopacy, a good deal of which are inserted in works not purely controversial; his polemical works you may skip altogether, unless you have a taste for the exertions of vigorous reason and subtle

distinguishing on uninteresting topics. Such of his works as you should begin with, to get a taste for him (after which your Love will lead you to his Polemical and drier works, as Love led Leander 'over boots' knee-deep thro' the Hellespont), but read first the Holy Living and Dying, and his Life of Christ and Sermons, both in folio. And, above all, try to get a beautiful little tract on the 'Measures and offices of Friendship,' printed with his *opuscula* duodecimo, and also at the end of his Polemical Discourses in folio. Another thing you will observe in Bp. Taylor, without which consideration you will do him injustice. He wrote to different classes of people. His Holy Living and Dying and Life of Christ were designed and have been used as popular books of family Devotion, and have been thumbed by old women, and laid about in the window seats of old houses in great families, like the Bible, and the 'Queene-like-Closet or rare boke of Recipes in medicine and cookery, fitted to all capacities.'

"Accordingly in these *the fancy* is perpetually applied to; any slight conceit, allusion, or analogy, any 'prettiness,' a story true or false,

serves for an argument adapted to women and young persons, and 'incompetent judgments;' whereas the Liberty of Prophecy (a book in your father's bookcase) is a series of severe and masterly reasoning, fitted to great Clerks and learned Fathers, with no more of Fancy than is subordinate and ornamental.—Such various powers had the Bishop of Down and Connor, Administrator of the See of Dromore!

"My theme and my story!

"Farewell,

"C. LAMB.

"April 6, 1801."

It is magnificent. Lamb never wrote more glowingly. In his next letter, which is undated, he returned to the Bishop. Robert seems to have replied to the above letter by asking Lamb why he did not himself make a selection of Jeremy Taylor's "beauties." Lamb was properly indignant:—

"To your inquiry respecting a selection from Bp. Taylor I answer—it cannot be done, and if it could it would not *take* with John Bull. It cannot be done, for who can disen-

tangle and unthread the rich texture of Nature and Poetry, sewn so thick into a stout coat of theology, without spoiling both *lace* and *coat?* How beggarly and how bald do even Shakespeare's Princely Pieces look when thus violently divorced from *connection* and *circumstance!* When we meet with To be or not to be, or Jacques' moralisings upon the Deer, or Brutus and Cassius' quarrel and reconciliation, —in an Enfield Speaker, or in Elegant Extracts, —how we stare, and will scarcely acknowledge to ourselves (what we are conscious we feel) that they are flat and have no power. Something exactly like this have I experienced when I have picked out similes and stars from Holy Dying and shown them *per se*, as you'd show specimens of minerals or pieces of rock. Compare the grand effect of the Star-paved firmament, and imagine a boy capable of picking out those pretty twinklers one by one and playing at chuck-farthing with them. Everything in heaven and earth, in man and in story, in books and in fancy, acts by Confederacy, by juxtaposition, by circumstance and place. Consider a fine family (if I were not writing to you I might instance your own) of sons and

daughters, with a respectable father and a handsome mother at their heads, all met in one house, and happy round one table. Earth cannot show a more lovely and venerable sight, such as the Angels in heaven might lament that in their country there is no marrying or giving in marriage. Take and split this Body into individuals—show the separate caprices, vagaries, &c., of Charles, Rob, or Plum, one a Quaker, another a Churchman. The eldest daughter seeking a husband out of the pale of parental faith—another warping, perhaps—the father a prudent, circumspective, do-me-good sort of a man *blest* with children whom no ordinary rules can circumscribe. I have not room for all particulars—but just as this happy and venerable Body of a family loses by splitting and considering individuals too nicely, so it is when we pick out Best Bits out of a great writer. 'Tis the *sum* total of his mind which affects us.

"C. L."

For the sake of continuity the letter has been transposed. In the original, the two paragraphs that follow came first:—

"I am not dead nor asleep. But Manning is in town, and Coleridge is in town, and I am making a thorough alteration in the structure of my play for Publication. My brain is overwrought with variety of worldly-intercourse. I have neither time nor mind for scribbling. Who shall deliver me from the body of this Death?

"Only continue to write and to believe that when the Hour comes I shall strike like Jack of the Clock, *id est*, I shall once more become a regular correspondent of Robert and Plumstead. How is the benevolent, loud-talking, Shakspere-loving Brewer?"

The play was "John Woodvil," but the "benevolent, loud-talking, Shakspere-loving Brewer" eludes research.

Lamb continued critical. His next letter—the last of this little burst of fine enthusiasm—dealt with the acting of George Frederick Cooke, who was just then drawing crowds to Covent Garden:—

"Cooke in 'Richard the Third' is a perfect caricature. He gives you the *monster* Richard,

but not the *man* Richard. Shakespear's bloody character impresses you with awe and deep admiration of his witty parts, his consummate hypocrisy, and indefatigable prosecution of purpose. You despise, detest, and loathe the cunning, vulgar, low and fierce Richard, which Cooke substitutes in his place. He gives you no other idea than of a vulgar villain, rejoycing in his being able to over reach, and not possessing that joy in *silent* consciousness, but betraying it, like a *poor* villain, in sneers and distortions of the face, like a droll at a country fair: not to add that cunning so self-betraying and manner so vulgar could never have deceived the politic Buckingham nor the soft Lady Anne: *both* bred in courts, would have turned with disgust from such a fellow. Not but Cooke has *powers;* but not of discrimination. His manner is strong, coarse, and vigourous, and well adapted to some characters. But the lofty imagery and high sentiments and high passions of *Poetry* come black and prose-smoked from his prose Lips. I have not seen him in *Over Reach*, but from what I remember of the character, I think he could not have chosen one more fit. I thought the play a

highly finished one when I read it some time back. I *remember* a most noble image. Sir Giles, drawing his sword in the last scene, says:

> Some undone widow sits upon mine arm,
> And takes away the use on't.[1]

This is horribly fine, and I am not sure that it did not suggest to me my conclusion of Pride's Cure;[2] but my imitation is miserably inferior.

> This arm was busy in the day of Naseby:
> 'Tis paralytic now, and knows no use of weapons.

Pierre and Jaffier are the best things in Otway. Belvidera is a poor Creature, and has had more than her due fame. Monimia is a little better, but she *whines*. I like Calista in the Fair Penitent better than either of Otway's women. Lee's Massacre of Paris is a noble play, very chastely and finely written. His Alexander is full of that madness 'which rightly should possess a poet's brain.' Œdipus is also a fine play, but less so than these two.

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[1] See Massinger's "New Way to pay Old Debts."

[2] "John Woodvil" was at first called "Pride's Cure."

It is a joint production of Lee and Dryden. All For Love begins with uncommon Spirit, but soon flags, and is of no worth upon the whole. The last scene of Young's Revenge is sublime: the rest of it not worth 1*d.*[1]

"I want to have your opinion and Plumstead's on Cooke's 'Richard the Third.' I am possessed with an admiration of the genuine Richard, his genius, and his mounting spirit, which no consideration of his cruelties can depress. Shakespear has not made Richard so black a Monster as is supposed. Wherever he is monstrous, it was to conform to vulgar opinion. But he is generally a Man. Read his most exquisite address to the Widowed Queen to court her daughter for him—the topics of maternal feeling, of a deep knowledge of the heart, are such as no monster could have supplied.[2] Richard must have *felt* before he could

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[1] Pierre, Jaffier and Belvidera are in Otway's "Venice Preserved," and Monimia is in the same writer's "Orphan." "The Fair Penitent" is Rowe's adaptation of "The Fatal Dowry," by Massinger and Field.

[2] Lamb refers to the whole of Scene iv. of Act iv. It will be noticed that he has no prejudice in favour of any particular form of spelling Shakespeare's name. Shakspeare, Shakespear, and Shakspere —he offers all three.

feign so well; tho' ambition choked the good seed. I think it the most finished piece of Eloquence in the world; of *persuasive* oratory far above Demosthenes, Burke, or any man, far exceeding the courtship of Lady Anne. *Her* relenting is barely natural, after all; the more perhaps S.'s merit to make *impossible* appear *probable*, but the *Queen's consent* (taking in all the circumstances and topics, *private* and *public*, with his angelic address, able to draw the host of [piece cut out of letter] Lucifer), is *probable;* and [piece cut out of letter] resisted it. This observation applies to many other parts. All the inconsistency is, that Shakespeare's better genius was forced to struggle against the prejudices which made a monster of Richard. He set out to paint a *monster*, but his human sympathies produced a *man.*

"Are you not tired with all this *ingenious* criticism? I am.

"*Richard itself* is totally metamorphosed in the wretched *acting play* of that name, which you will see: altered by *Cibber.*

"God bless you,

[The signature is cut off.]

"July 26, 1801."

And then came a space of some three years, in which Lamb either wrote not at all to his young friend, or wrote nothing that has been preserved. Probably the correspondence ceased, for a partnership in a printing and bookselling business had been found for Robert in Birmingham, and its cares seem to have been engrossing.

# IX

## ROBERT LLOYD'S MARRIAGE

### 1804

We may gather from references in Lamb's letters to Manning and others, that during this interval he had occasional news of the Lloyd family; while in the summer of 1802, when his sister and he visited Coleridge at Keswick, they saw Charles Lloyd. But of that meeting there is no record beyond the bare statement.

Of Robert Lloyd we have no tidings whatever until March, 1803, when, in writing to Southey, Lamb said: "Robert Lloyd has written me a masterly letter, containing a character of his father. See how different from Charles he views the old man! (*Literatim*): 'My father smokes, repeats Homer in Greek, and Virgil, and is learning, when from business, with all the vigour of a young man, Italian. He is, really, a wonderful man. He mixes public and private business, the intricacies of disordering life, with his religion and devotion.

No one more rationally enjoys the romantic scenes of Nature, and the chit-chat and little vagaries of his children; and, though surrounded with an ocean of affairs, the very neatness of his most obscure cupboard in the house passes not unnoticed. I never knew anyone view with such clearness, nor so well satisfied with things as they are, and make such allowance for things which must appear perfect Syriac to him.' By the last [says Lamb] he means the Lloydisms of the younger branches. His portrait of Charles (exact as far as he has had opportunities of noting him) is most exquisite:—'Charles is become steady as a church, and as straightforward as a Roman road. It would distract him to mention anything that was not as plain as sense; he seems to have run the whole scenery of life, and now rests as the formal precision of non-existence.' Here is genius, I think [says Lamb again], and 'tis seldom a young man, a Lloyd, looks at a father (so differing) with such good-nature while he is alive."

And so we come to Lamb's next letter to Robert, and learn something more of the young man's employment during the interval. He had

been falling in love. Lamb wrote (with some forgetfulness of his appreciation of Robert's letter, passages from which he had copied out for Coleridge, as we have just seen) :—

"Dear Robert,—I received your notes safe, and thank you for them. It seems you are about to be married. Joy to you and uninterrupted satisfaction in that state. But who is the Lady? It is the character of your letters that you omit facts, dates, names, and matter, and describe nothing but feelings, in which, as I cannot always partake, as being more intense in degree or different in kind from my own tranquil ones, I cannot always well tell how to reply. Your dishes are too much sauced and spiced and flavoured for me to suppose that you can relish my plain meats and vulgar aliment. Still, Robert, if I cannot always send you of the same, they have a smack and a novelty, a Robert-ism about them, that make them a dainty stimulus to my palate at times. I have little to tell you of. You are mistaken, I am disengaged from all newspaper connexions, and breathe a freer air in consequence. I was bound, like Gulliver, in a multitude of

little chains, which, by quotidian leasing swelled to a rack and a gibbet in the year's account. I am poorer but happier. Your three pounds came seasonably, but I doubt whether I am fairly entitled to them as a debt.

"I am obliged to break off here, and would not send this unfinished, but that you might otherwise be uneasy about the moneys.

"Am I ever to see you? for it is like letters to the dead, or for a friend to write to his friend in the Fortunate Isles, or the Moon, or at the Antipodes, to address a line to ONE in Warwickshire that I am never to see in London. I shall lose the very face of Robert by disuse, and I question, if I were a painter, if I could now paint it from memory.

"I could tell you many things, but you are so spiritual and abstracted, that I fear to insult you with tidings of this world. But may your approaching husband-hood humanise you. I think I see a dawn. I am sure joy is rising upon you, and I stand a tiptoe to see the sun ascending till it gets up and up, and 'while a man tells the story,' shows at last a fair face and a full light. God bless you, Robt.,

"Tuesday, March 13, 1804." "C. L.

The Lady was Hannah Hart, a Quakeress, the daughter of Francis Hart, banker, of Nottingham; and she seems to have been a model wife. From the evidence of a bundle of letters written by Robert Lloyd during his courtship it can be said that he wooed her on a high, almost a transcendental, plane. To read documents so intimate is not a congenial task, but a biographer must take his material wherever he can. The letters in question are distinguished by none of the acumen and literary skill which Lamb admired in Robert's portraits of the two Charles Lloyds, nor have they any of the pretty endearments and private tendernesses in which love letters are often so wealthy: rather are they rhapsodic and rhetorical. One interesting fact which they reveal is that Robert had joined the militia, a step suggesting that his break with Quakerism had been completed. The fact is, however, that he returned to the fold.

Robert was married in the Castle Dunnington Meeting-house, in Leicestershire, on August 2, 1804, and with this marriage in particular and marriages in general was Lamb's next letter occupied. The date is September 13, 1804,

and it contains a passage in Elia's best manner on the lenitives of the single state:—

"DEAR ROBERT,—I was startled in a very pleasant manner by the contents of your letter. It was like your good self to take so handsome an opportunity of renewing an old friendship. I thank you kindly for your offers to bring me acquainted with Mrs. Ll. I cannot come now, but assuredly I will some time or other, to see how this new relation sits upon you. I am naturally shy of new faces; but the Lady who has chosen my old friend Robert cannot have a repelling one. Assure her of my sincere congratulations and friendly feelings. Mary joins in both with me, and considers herself as only left out of your kind invitation by some LAPSUS STYLI. We have already had all the holydays we can have this year. We have been spending our usual summer month at Richmond, from which place we traced the banks of the old Thames for ten and twenty miles, in daily walks or rides, and found beauties which may compare with Ulswater and Windermere. We visited Windsor, Hampton, &c.,

&c.—but this is a deviation from the subject with which I began my letter.

"Some day I certainly shall come and see you in your new light; no longer the restless (but good) [? single] Robert; but now the staid, sober (and not less good) married Robert. And how does Plumstead, the impetuous, take your getting the start of him? When will he subside into matrimony? Priscilla has taken a long time indeed to think about it. I will suppose that her first choice is now her final; though you do not expressly say that she is to be a Wordsworth. I wish her, and dare promise her, all happiness.

"All these new nuptials do not make me unquiet in the perpetual prospect of celibacy. There is a quiet dignity in old bachelorhood, a leisure from cares, noise, &c., an enthronisation upon the armed-chair of a man's feeling that he may sit, walk, read, unmolested, to none accountable—but hush! or I shall be torn in pieces like a churlish Orpheus by young married women and bride-maids of Birmingham. The close is this, to every man that way of life, which in his election is best. Be as happy in yours as I am determined to be in

mine, and we shall strive lovingly who shall sing best the praises of matrimony, and the praises of singleness.

"Adieu, my old friend in a new character, and believe me that no 'wounds' have pierced our friendship; only a long want of seeing each other has disfurnished us of topics on which to talk. Is not your new fortunes a topic which may hold us for some months (the honey months at least)?

"C. Lamb."

Priscilla Lloyd—who had definitely left the Friends, although, as her son, the Bishop of St. Andrews, in his "Annals of My Early Life," with some glee tells us, she was not baptized until after her marriage—became Mrs. Christopher Wordsworth within a short time of Lamb's question. Her husband was then a Norfolk rector, but a little while later he became vicar of St. Mary's, Lambeth, where most of Priscilla's married life was spent. Of that more will be said in another place.

# X

## ROBERT LLOYD'S LONDON VISIT

### 1809

One result of Robert Lloyd's marriage was to interrupt his correspondence with Lamb. This it did so completely that between Lamb's last letter—of September, 1804—and the one that followed it, more than four years elapsed. Nothing is much easier than to allow a correspondence, even of the most familiar nature, to fail, and among received means of causing a break none has more vogue than marriage. Marriage in itself is sufficient, but Robert Lloyd was also partner in a business which demanded a large share of his energies, and the cares of a young family were thickening upon him. Moreover, Lamb's letters had always been replies to his friend's, and therefore when the friend ceased to write, Lamb ceased too.[1]

[1] Mr. W. P. James, writing in the "St. James's Gazette," at the time when certain extracts from Lamb's letters to Robert Lloyd were appearing in the "Cornhill Magazine" (May and June, 1898), treated

Early in 1809, however, Robert Lloyd had occasion to visit London on business. He wrote to Lamb forewarning him of his approach. Lamb replied at once :—

"DEAR ROBERT,—A great gap has been filled up since our intercourse was broken off. We shall at least have some things to talk over when we meet. That you should never have been in London since I saw you last is a fact which I cannot account for on the principles of my own mental formation. You are worthy

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Robert with severity. Thus : "Robert Lloyd may have had all the gifts and graces Charles Lamb said he had ; but this grace apparently was not given him, to appreciate at its real worth his rare privilege in being Charles Lamb's Correspondent. Imagine receiving such letters as those printed . . . in 'Cornhill,' the one on Isaak Walton, the one on Jeremy Taylor, the one on London, and then deliberately foregoing the chance of receiving more of the same kind for lack of an occasional line of his own. He married a mere mortal wife, and therefore he could not write! And so for three whole years there were no more letters from Lamb. People said the King of Bavaria was mad because he had performances of 'Lohengrin' in an empty theatre for his own private delectation. What is one to say of the man who might have gone on receiving the most perfect little essays of Elia by post all for his sole self, and lightly threw away the privilege?" What, indeed? With every desire in the world to appear for Robert Lloyd's defence (as his biographer naturally has), it is impossible to find anything to say.

to be mentioned with Claudian's Old Man of Verona.[1] I forbear to ask you any questions concerning your family: *who* are dead, and *who* married; I will not anticipate our meeting. I have been in total darkness respecting you all these years. I am just up; and have heard, without being able to confirm the fact, that Drury Lane Theatre is burnt to the ground. Of Walton's 'Angler' a new edition is just published with the original plates revived. I think of buying it. The old editions are two guineas, and two guineas and a half. I have not forgotten our ride from Saffron Walden, and the madness of young parson Thomson of Cambridge, that I took your brother to see. He is gone as a missionary to the East.

"I live at present at No. 16 Mitre Court Buildings, Inner Temple. I shall move at Lady Day, or a little later: if you don't find me in M.C.B., I shall be at No. 2 *or* 4 Inner Temple Lane, at either of which places I shall be

[1] "De Sene Veronensi, qui suburbium nunquam egressus est;" or, as Cowley translated it, in his essay "On the Dangers of an Honest Man in Much Company:"

> "Happy the man, who his whole time doth bound
> Within th' inclosure of his little ground"—and so on.

happy to shake my old friend Robert by the hand.

"C. L.

"Saturday, Feb. 25, 1809."

There has been a previous allusion to the young parson Thomson in an earlier letter, (see page 119). The story of the ride from Saffron Walden will now never be known. Of the accuracy of the rumour of the burning of Drury Lane the "Rejected Addresses" are testimony enough.

Robert Lloyd reached London late in March, and forthwith plunged into excitement. The story of this momentous visit is told in a series of sprightly letters to his wife—letters of greater interest far than those which he penned as a wooer. The first ran thus:

"March, 1809.

"My dearest Hannah,—My head has been in a perpetual whirl since I came here, and in two days I have lived many weeks. I would fain have written to you by to-day's post, but it was scarcely practicable. The first thing after breakfast we went to the Horse Guards

to hear the band play while they mounted guard. We afterwards went to Mr. Millar's, bookseller, in Albemarle Street, where we had a complete treat. For instance, we saw a copy of the 'Shipwreck,' printed on velvet [?vellum], and the price thirty guineas—indeed, I never saw such splendour in the *furniture* of Books before. Mr. Millar was not in the shop, but in a book room fitted up in the first style of Elegance. From thence we went to the London Institution, where I was completely delighted. The House of Commons afterwards attracted our notice—the place where *Fox* and *Pitt* sat occasioned most lively emotions. I should have gone to-night in the gallery, but a circumstance, as follows, prevented me. Having called at the India House and met with my *old* friend Lamb, who asked me to dinner, which I, of course, accepted, necessarily prevented my attending the House of Commons. Lamb, and his sister *especially*, received me in a very kind manner; we supped with *Godwin*, and from him I am this moment returned—(twelve o'clock). You would, I know, my dear love, have been delighted in beholding his family; he appears to keep no

servants, and his children to occupy their places. I was much gratified in seeing the three children of Mrs. Wollstonecraft, two girls and a son. One of the girls, the eldest, is a sweet, unaffected creature about fourteen. She handed me porter, and attracted much of my attention. Mrs. Godwin is *not* a pleasant woman, a wife far different from the one you would suppose *such* a man would have selected. I dine out again to-morrow, and shall sup with Lamb. Godwin is a bookseller *! ! ! ! ! ! !*

"I am your sincerely affecte. Husband,

"R. LLOYD."

The phalanx of notes of exclamation may be taken to signify Robert's excitement on finding that Godwin was a bookseller *too:* that is to say, in Robert's own line of business. His old friend, Lamb, shared his opinion concerning Mrs. Godwin. Lamb called her the Bad Baby, and, in one letter, "that d——d Mrs. Godwin." The Bad Baby, however, viewed Robert more leniently. "I must not, it seems," wrote Godwin at the end of one of his subsequent commercial letters to Robert's firm, "close my letter without some kind message from Mrs.

Godwin to Mr. Lloyd, who has become, I know not how, strangely a favourite with her." And again, in another, he remarked: "Mrs. Godwin is just now from home, or I am sure that she would add messages to this letter that I should prove myself a mere bungler if I endeavoured to supply."

Robert was mistaken in crediting Mary Wollstonecraft with three children. He must not, however, be blamed, for Godwin's was a confusing household. Mary Wollstonecraft had but two children: the ill-starred Fanny Imlay, born in 1794, and Mary, in 1797. In 1809, therefore, Fanny would be fifteen and Mary twelve; so that it probably was Fanny and not the future Mrs. Shelley, who plied the young visitor with porter.

Charles Lloyd would, of course, be known to Godwin, at any rate by name, for he had publicly interested himself in the philosopher's theories. The preface to "Edmund Oliver" tells us that it was written to confute Godwin's views on free love, while among Charles Lloyd's poems is an address to Mary Wollstonecraft.

Here is Robert's second letter:

"Thursday Morning, *half-past* 8.

"My dearest Hannah,—I still go on enjoying myself exceedingly. Yesterday I attended the meeting in Westminster Hall for the purpose of thanking Colonel Wardle. I was nearly squeezed to death. . . . I dined with a Bookseller, and then adjourned to my old friend Lamb. Mr. Rickman, secretary to the Speaker, Capt. Burney, Bro. of Miss Burney the novelist, and Mr. Dyer the poet [G.D.] were of the party. We had nothing but cold pork and a cheese and no other beveridge than porter. Pipes were introduced. I did not return till half-past *twelve*.

"I shall call upon my Uncle John to-day, and intend sleeping at his House on Friday and Saturday. Of course you will continue to direct to me *here;* though, much to *my* disgrace, a letter from you has not appeared; however, I confidently look for *one* this morning. I write thus early having innumerable engagements, and doubting whether a spare hour will occur during the day. Much to my surprise, I found your Brother's card on our table this morning. Of course I shall call upon him, and congratulate them on the festival. The Shakspeare

Gallery, Miss Linwood's Exhibition, and Covent Garden new Theatre, the Opera, and the play remain to be seen. Drury Lane Theatre *still* smoaks. What a sad ruin does it exhibit!

"How is little Mary? and how are you? Pray write frequent and believe me

"Most sincerely your friend,

"R. Lloyd."

In a postscript, appended at 11 o'clock, Robert says that he has engaged to accompany some friends to the Theatre on Monday "to see Mrs. Siddons, and to the Opera on Tuesday." He adds: "Pray dispatch me from the Dog Inn at seven O'clock in the Evening 2 pair of White silk stockings. I must go smart to the Opera,—I have ordered a pair of dress-clothes in London."

Easter, 1809, brought Hannah Lloyd a letter, written on Good Friday, telling of further adventures:—

"I drank tea in company with Mr. Godwin last night; he is a most delightful Man—the modulation of his voice was beautiful, and his language uncommonly correct. I shall call upon [him] again to-morrow, to give him an

order; poor Man, he is much to be felt for. I shall tell you all on my return, a volume would scarcely contain what I have seen, felt, and heard. . . . Lamb was quite delighted with the 'Walton' I brought with me. I go with him to Captain Burney's to-morrow Evening, and most of Sunday I shall pass with my old friend. I met Wordsworth by accident yesterday. He looked very well, but he gave an *unpleasant* account of Priscilla, she has had something of a relapse, and her ague has returned again."

Robert seems to have intercepted Lamb in his purpose of buying the new "Walton." The next communication from London, dated April 3, 1809, offers a pleasant glimpse of Charles and Mary Lamb at home:—

"I spent Saturday Evening with Mr. Godwin. He is a delightful man, and mild as a child—his accents are most fascinating. The Picture of Mrs. Wollstonecraft [? hangs] over the fireplace. Yes, *my love*, I shall have volumes to tell you, and an infinite store for my Mind to dwell upon. Oh, that you were with me! how delicious then would be my delight! The time I hope will come when we shall visit

*London* together; it is indeed a place rich with the stores of amusement and interest. I spent yesterday with Lamb and his sister—it is sweetly gratifying to see them. They were not up when I went. Mary (his sister) the moment I entered the Room, calling from her chamber, said—'Robert, I am coming.' They appear to sleep in Rooms by each other.

"If we may use the expression, their Union of affection is what we conceive of marriage in Heaven. They are the World *one* to the *other*. They are writing a Book of Poetry for children together. Lamb and I amused ourselves in the afternoon in reading the manuscripts—I shall send one or two of the pieces in my next. Lamb is the most original being you can conceive, and suited to me, in some of his habits, or ways of thinking, to a tee." [Several lines are unfortunately here cut away. Apparently they formed part of a character sketch of Lamb, for the letter continues] "Sun rises and where it sets he is perfectly indifferent about, and is ignorant which way the wind blows."

On the next day Robert wrote again. This is a passage:—

"We saw the Opera dancing last night, so

we shall not miss much; girls from nine to fifteen, of sorted sizes and proportions, danced; it had a pretty effect. I was much delighted with the Opera House, it quite eclipses Drury Lane. Mrs. Siddons's voice filled the immense expanse; the Boxes have crimson curtains on each side which give a grand appearance.

"I was delighted with the meeting at Guildhall on Saturday. I dined with our brother and sister to-day—we decline going to the Opera; I prefer Lamb's company, which I shall enjoy to-night. I shall endeavour to see Mrs. Siddons and Kemble in 'Macbeth.' Paper won't allow of more, I am glad chickies are well."

Four pieces from Charles and Mary Lamb's "Poetry for Children" were then copied:—"Choosing a Name" ("I have got a new-born sister"), "Breakfast" ("A dinner-party—coffee, tea"), "Choosing a Profession" ("A Creole Boy from the West Indies brought"), and "Summer Friends" ("The Swallow is a summer bird"), the first signed "C. L.," and the three others "M. L." In his next letter, the last of the series, Robert referred to them again:—

"I sent you on Tuesday a few verses, written 2 [? 3] of them by Mary Lamb and the other by C. Lamb. It is *task* work to them, they are writing for money, and a Book of Poetry for Children being likely to sell has induced them to compose one; the verses I sent you were part of the collection. . . .

"I was much pleased with Kemble and Mrs. Siddons in 'Macbeth' on Tuesday. I spend this evening with Lamb—my spirits were [? are] uncommonly flat. I dined yesterday with Charles's Old friend [James] White. By-the-by, I saw Mrs. Clarke yesterday—she was walking in Cheapside with a Mr. Sullivan, who is now reported to live with her. She has very fine large Eyes, and [is] very much like a picture in the shops, where she is represented as lying almost at length on a sofa. I have not seen it in Birmingham, the one I saw there is not at all like.[1]

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[1] Mrs. Clarke was, of course, the notorious adventuress, the mistress of the Duke of York. The Duke had resigned his position as Commander-in-Chief on the 20th of March, 1809, a few days before Robert reached London, in consequence of the scandals caused by this *liaison*. On the 28th of the same month Lamb wrote to Manning:—

"If you see newspapers you will read about Mrs. Clarke. The sensation in London about this nonsensical business is marvellous. I

"This morning I saw the London Institution, the European Gallery (a most splendid collection of pictures and paintings), Miss Linwood's needlework (grand indeed), and the Panorama of Grand Cairo, with which I was much pleased—the Pyramids were a fine object. This evening I intend calling upon Lamb and Godwin. My time is fully filled up. I did not dine yesterday till near six. I long to come home and rest my weary feet by my own fireside . . . I love the employment of writing to you. You see my letters through a false medium; it is something like the beauty which the sun gives to inanimate objects. If I had written this morning, a greater tide of affection would have flowed. That we cannot always

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remember nothing in my life like it: thousands of ballads, caricatures, lives of Mrs. Clarke, in every blind alley. Yet in the midst of this stir [he adds], a sublime dancing-master, who attends a family we know at Kensington, being asked a question about the progress of the examinations in the House, inquired who Mrs. Clarke was. He had heard nothing of it. He had evaded this omnipresence by utter insignificancy! The Duke [of York] should make that man his confidential valet. I proposed locking him up, barring him the use of his fiddle and red pumps until he had minutely perused and committed to memory the whole body of the examinations, which employed the House of Commons a fortnight, to teach him to be more attentive to what concerns the public."

command. Accept of my dearest love, and believe me,

"Your sincerely affecte. Husband,

"ROBERT LLOYD."

And so ended the London visit.

Lamb's next letter to Robert Lloyd was dated January 1, 1810. Robert, falling into line with other of Lamb's friends, seems to have presented him with a bird. The reply ran:—

"DEAR ROBERT,—In great haste I write. The Turkey is down at the fire, and some pleasant friends are come in to partake of it. The Sender's Health shall not be forgot. What you tell me of your Father's perseverance in his honourable task gives me great pleasure. Seven Books are a serious earnest of the whole, which I hope to see finish'd.

"We had a delightful month in Wiltshire, four weeks of uniform fine weather, the only fine days which had been all the summer. Saw Salisbury Cathedral, Stonehenge, Wilton, &c., &c. Mary is in excellent health, and sends her

Love. Accept of mine, with my kind respects to Mrs. Ll—— and to your father and mother.

"Coleridge's FRIEND is occasionally sublime. What do you think of that Description of Luther in his Study in one of the earlier numbers?[1] The worst is, he is always promising something which never comes; it is now 18th Number, and continues introductory; the 17th (that stupid long letter) was nothing better than a Prospectus, and ought to have preceded the 1st Number. But I rejoice that it lives.

"When you come to London, you will find us at No. 4 Inner Temple Lane, with a few old Books, a few old Hogarth's round the room, and the Household Gods at last establish'd. The feeling of Home, which has been slow to come, has come at last. May I never move again, but may my next Lodging be my Coffin.[2]

"Yours truly,
"C. LAMB."

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[1] In the revised edition of "The Friend," this description is in the Second Section, Essay 2, "The First Landing Stage."

[2] On the 2nd of January, 1810, the day after supplying Robert Lloyd with this brief description of his new lodging, Lamb, in writing to Manning, thus amplified it:—

"In my best room is a choice collection of the works of Hogarth, an

The remark concerning Mr. Lloyd's perseverance is an allusion to the translation of the "Odyssey," upon which, as we shall see later, he was then engaged. The Wiltshire holiday was a visit to Hazlitt. To Coleridge Lamb had already written praise of the account of Luther in the Warteburg, in "The Friend:" "It is as fine as anything I ever read. God forbid that a man who has such things to say should be silenced for want of 100*l.*" "The Friend" lived only ten months, dying in March, 1810, before there was time to fulfil many of the promises to which Lamb referred.

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English painter of some humour. In my next best are shelves containing a small but well-chosen library. My best room commands a court, in which there are trees and a pump, the water of which is excellent cold, with brandy, and not very insipid without. Here I hope to set up my rest, and not quit till Mr. Powell, the undertaker, gives me notice that I may have possession of my last lodging. He lets lodgings for single gentlemen."

# XI

## ROBERT LLOYD'S DEATH

### 1811

ROBERT LLOYD can never have been strong. He came of a delicate family, and he did not spare himself. Impulsive, sensitive, sympathetic, and enthusiastic, he flung himself into whatever interested him with reckless abandon and wholeheartedness, and passed through the emotions of half a score of ordinary persons. Hence, when financial trouble came, or, if it did not actually come, loomed threateningly ahead, his panic was so complete as seriously to undermine his strength.

Immediately upon this worry came the illness of his brother Thomas, which he felt profoundly. Natures of such sensibility suffer in a degree inconceivable to those who are blessed with apathy, and under the combined assault Robert's constitution, at its best never qualified to support much strain, gave way.

The autumn of 1811 was indeed a terrible season for the Lloyd family. Thomas Lloyd died on September 12, in his thirty-second year, Caroline on October 15, in her twenty-second year, and Robert on the 26th of the same month, in his thirty-third year.

The testimony of Hannah Lloyd, in an account of her husband's death which she wrote, a few months afterwards, to be preserved for their children, shows that Robert, although he clung fondly to life, met death courageously and with confidence. The description of the course of his illness is too sad a story, but this little glimpse of his character is of shining beauty: "He possessed a disposition of engaging simplicity . . . his habits and pleasures were domestic, and when unclouded by nervous depression, exceedingly cheerful. Kindness and generosity were characteristic of his nature. When he entered his house, it might truly be said that he diffused a feeling of pleasure. You, my children, were accustomed to run to meet him with animated joy. His tasks led him to works of imagination and sentiment, and also to those of a devotional cast. Such was your lovely Father—to him I imparted every feeling

of my heart; he was uniformly the tenderest of friends—the sweetest companion."

That Charles Lamb felt the death of his friend we know from the grave and affectionate tribute to his memory which he composed for the *Gentleman's Magazine*. The following letter from Charles Lloyd to Robert's widow gives the memoir in full. "Such," he wrote, "is the beautiful and appropriate account sent to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, by dear Charles Lamb, who, if I lov'd him for nothing else, I should now love for the affecting interest that he has taken in the memory of my dearest Brother and Friend. C. Lamb sent me the written copy himself:—

"'To dilate in many words upon the character of R. Ll. would be to violate the modest regard due to *his* memory, who, in his lifetime, shrunk so anxiously from every species of notice. His constitutional misfortune was an excess of nervous sensibility which, in the purest of hearts, produced rather too great a spirit of self-abasement, a perpetual apprehension of not doing what was right. Yet beyond this tenderness he seemed absolutely to have no self-regards at all. His eye was single, and

ever fixed upon that form of goodness which he worshipped wherever he found it, except in himself. What he was to his parents and in his family the newness of their sorrow may make it unseasonable to touch at ; his loss, alas ! was but one in a complication of afflictions which have fallen so heavy of late upon a worthy house. But as a *Friend*, the writer of this memorial can witness, that what he once esteemed and loved, it was an unalterable law of his nature to continue to esteem and love.

"'Absences of years, the discontinuance of correspondence, from whatever cause, for ever so great a length of time, made no difference. It seemed as if the affectionate part of his nature could suffer no abatement. The display of what the world calls shining talents would have been incompatible with a character like his ; but he oftentimes let fall, in his familiar conversation, and in his letters, bright and original illustrations of feeling which might have been mistaken for genius, if his own watchful modest spirit had not constantly interposed to recall and substitute for them some of the ordinary forms of observation which lay less out of the circle of common sympa-

thy, within which his kind nature delighted to move.

"'To conclude:

> Love, Sweetness, Goodness, in his countenance shin'd
> So clear, as in no face with more delight.

But now he is gone, he has left his earthly companions; yet his departure had this in it to make us less sorrowful, that it was but as a gentle removing of the veil, which while he walked upon earth, seemed scarcely to separate his spirit from that world of heavenly and refined essences with which it is now indissolubly connected.'"[1]

"I contemplate his character," wrote Charles Lloyd of Robert, "as the most sweet and affecting that I ever knew." Further testimony came from Charles in the shape of four sonnets which he sent to Hannah Lloyd a few days after Robert's death. This is the first and simplest:—

[1] The article appeared in the Obituary of the *Gentleman's Magazine* —unsigned—in November, 1811. A comparison of Lamb's copy, as sent to Charles Lloyd, with the printed version discloses certain textual changes which may have been made in proof by himself, or by the editor. In the *Gentleman's Magazine* the little memoir ended at the words "within which his kind nature delighted to move."

My friend, my Brother, no more shall I see
That face affectionate, that face benign,
Those eyes where tenderness did always shine
Whene'er they turn'd their gentle beams on me!
If ever Faith, and Generosity,
Love and benevolence almost divine
Forgetfulness of self, Humility,
Blest Human-nature,—Robert, they were thine!
Thy smile—I see it now—was kind and sweet
As the first dawnings of a vernal morn:
Thy warm solicitude each wish to meet
And catch the struggling meaning e'er 'twas born,
Ne'er shall I see again! Who o'er thy Urn,
Lov'd friend, like Him who lov'd thee most, should mourn?

Another brother—James—in sending Hannah Lloyd a bundle of Robert's letters added this note:—"You will see, my dear Sister, by these letters written by Beloved Robert before you knew him that he was the dear affectionate and truly sincere Brother and friend as you have since proved him to be in the character of a Husband. No time can obliterate the *sweet fragrance of his person.*"

Robert Lloyd left four children, three girls and a boy named after his father. To end this chapter on a gayer note, it may be remarked

that among the Lloyd correspondence is one letter written to the young Robert by his mother in 1824, when he was a schoolboy of twelve. "I hope [it begins] my dearest boy will like the cake which accompanies this." Then follow home news and a few maternal counsels, and at the end is a further reference to the cake: "I am extremely mortified at the cake being so much less than I ordered." Little Robert Lloyd probably was mortified too. His answer is concise: "It came durin our Easter Holidays. We were both at Gateacre at the time. 3 of us eat it one day."

# XII

## MR. LLOYD'S "ILIAD"

### 1807–1809

Of Mr. Lloyd's love of classics and his unusual powers of memory something has already been said. But his interest in Greek and Latin did not stop at reading and repeating his favourite poems in these languages: he passed on to make versions of them in English. Mr. Lloyd was always a very busy man, yet in direct defiance of Cowper's sentiment—

> It is a maxim of much weight,
> Worth conning o'er and o'er,
> He who has Homer to translate,
> Had need do nothing more.—

he turned the whole of the "Odyssey" into verse, a portion, if not all, of the "Iliad," and the Epistles of Horace.

Mr. Lloyd's object was amusement and self-instruction, yet the desire for print, which almost always accompanies authorship, coming

upon him, he instructed Robert, in 1807, to strike off a few copies of the twenty-fourth book of the "Iliad;" and these were distributed among his friends.

The decasyllabic couplet was the form adopted, and Mr. Lloyd stated in the preface that he had "endeavoured to keep near to Homer's meaning, though not so literally as Cowper has done in his translation, which has preserved much of the grandeur and simplicity of the original."

In due course criticisms flowed in.

Charles Lloyd the younger, after showing the version to Coleridge, sent his father the following message: "Coleridge told me that he was very much pleased indeed with thy translation, and I have no doubt but that these were his undisguised sentiments, as he introduced the subject himself—he said that there was a *naturalness* (if one may be allowed to coin a word) and ease about the translation that very much delighted him, and much regretted that more perplexing avocations should interfere with thy ardour in the pursuit."

That was brief and pertinent. From Anna Seward, however, who then stood in the same

relation to Lichfield as Shakespeare to Stratford-on-Avon—as "Swan"—came three lengthy and florid communications. Mr. Lloyd seems to have sent her not only the printed volume, but also a manuscript version of the Sixth Book: for it is with the Sixth Book that her first and second letters deal. Her third bears upon the Twenty-fourth. The letters are inordinately long, but they are so splendidly pontifical that they are here given in full:—

"Lichfield, Sept. 30, 1807.

"I thank you, Sir, for having allowed me to peruse your translation of the 6th book of Homer's 'Iliad.' If our language were not already enriched with the noblest translation Europe has produced of that great Work [*i.e.* Pope's], I should expect you to finish and to publish *yours*:—but who may hope, especially on the same model of verse, to approach *that* which seldom-equalled genius, never-excelled taste, and the most unwearied care to polish and correct, have combined to render perfect as a *Poem?*

"I know it is attacked by some of the Greek Scholiasts, for being in *rhyme*:—but *that* ob-

jection would lie against *yours*. They are angry also that Pope chose to throw a veil of poetic light over a great number of the original passages, which have the duskiness of low and prosaic language.

"Cowper stood forth professing to show Homer as he *is*. What has been the result?—a few of the old Bard's Idolators, who not content with adoring his sublimity and his beauty, like his *faults* better than *excellence* from any *other* pen, find in Cowper's undeviating fidelity expiation for the extreme poetic inferiority to the *established* Translation.

"By that vast majority of Readers, who do not understand the Original, Pope and Cowper's Version will be judged merely by the respective *poetry* which each contains. The fiat of these has already proved that the Painter's axiom extends also to Poets—'It is better to sin against *truth* than *beauty!*'

"The *best* blank Verse is unquestionably a more majestic vehicle for Epic Poetry than rhyme. Could we see a translation of Homer, free and judicious as Pope's, in such verse as that of the 'Paradise Lost,' or even as the best parts of the 'Task,' I should not, with all my

long admiration of Pope's, hesitate to prefer the *rival* translation—but Cowper's Homer, excepting a few noble passages, is wretched blank verse, no grace, no flow, no harmony, and frequently falls into the construction of the rhyming couplet, and even with terminations which jingle on ear, like bad rhymes; and yet mine is the 2*nd* Edition, which his letters tell us he had so carefully corrected, and so largely altered as almost to render it a *new* version. See opening of the 6th book, four immediately successive lines:

> With various fortune on the middle *plain*
> By Simoïs laved, and Xanthus' gulphy *stream*.
> First, Ajax, bulwark of the Grecians, *broke*
> A Trojan phalanx and illumed with *hope*
> The mind of all his followers,—[1]

He stole the picturesque epithet, *gulphy*, from Pope,

> And gulphy Xanthus foams along the field,

[1] Miss Seward was unfortunate in her edition of "Cowper." The passage, in Southey's edition—the first—runs thus:—

> On the champain spread
> The Xanthus and the Simois between
> First Telamonian Ajax, bulwark firm
> Of the Achaians, broke the Trojan ranks,
> And kindled for the Greeks a gleam of hope,
> Slaying the bravest of the Thracian band.

than which a more poetic line was *never* written.

"I am sure you will forgive the sincerity you have injoined when I confess, that I do not think it *possible* to *transcend* in rhyme Pope's translation of Homer, nor probable that it will ever be *equalled.* The images are so bold, and striking, the numbers so full, free, and sonorous!

Now Heav'n forsakes the fight: th' Immortals yield
To human force and human skill, the field:
Dark showers of javelins fly from foes to foes;
Now here, now there, the tide of combat flows;
While Troy's fam'd streams, that bound the deathful plain,
On either side run purple to the main.
Great Ajax first to conquest led the way,
Broke the thick ranks, and turn'd the doubtful day.

Here *all* is poetic strength, picture and harmony. If Homer has expressed the sense *differently* he cannot have expressed it *better.* In all likelihood not near so well. A Translator to rise upon *such* an Original is poetic merit of the first order.

"It has always been agreed that, for whoever takes a subject which has been previously taken and worked upon to the full satisfaction

of the Public in general, it is not enough that he should even succeed *as well* as his Predecessor: he must *transcend* him, or the rival attempts will instantly perish, neglected, and forgotten.

"Were you not here so magnificently preoccupied on the field of fame, and were to compleat your work, I should venture to point out several places where it would be necessary to dignify the expression: '*Between where* Simois,' etc.; '*To face about* and meet the Grecian Foe;' 'I go to Troy, *a special Messenger*,' which makes Hector an errand-boy. Pope says:

> One hour demands me in the Trojan Wall
> To bid our altars flame and victims fall.

[Miss Seward continues to point out Mr. Lloyd's blemishes]:

> Like *other young men* who have *dar'd* my dart
> No *Man can send me* to the shades below
> Till my appointed time *be come, to go.*
> That thou art brave *there's no man can deny.*

One of these prosaicisms recalls the burlesque song:

> But to come for to go
> For to frighten one so.

They may be *Homer*, but if so, how vast the Greek Poet's debt to Pope for having spread over them and their brethren

> That beauteous veil, of brightness made,
> At once their lustre and their shade.[1]

If I could have procured time for the examination of your MS., and for its comparison with the 6th book of Pope's Homer, you had earlier received it back.

"Pray be so good as to remember me kindly to your accomplished and amiable Son when next you write to him, and to believe me, Sir,

"Your obliged Friend,

"ANNA SEWARD."

The accomplished and amiable son was Charles Lloyd the younger.

The translator seems not unnaturally to have replied to the foregoing missive, and in due course the Oracle spoke again. This is her second letter:

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[1] Miss Seward was adapting Samuel Butler on Moonlight ("Hudibras," part ii., canto 1, 907–8):

> Mysterious veil, of brightness made,
> That's both her lustre and her shade.

"LICHFIELD, NOV. 25, 1807.

"SIR,—I meant earlier to have acknowledged your reply to my last letter, but a series of ill-health, and a press of business for my pen, produced this involuntary procrastination.

"The eminent Scholars whose high approbation your translation of Homer has obtained may well weigh with you in decided preponderance against my unscholastic opinion. By those who understand the Original the most *faithful* English version will be likely to be most esteemed, yet with fidelity to Homer rhymes are scarcely compatible.

"You are sensible, however, that none who can drink the Homeric Song from the fountain head will do more than, from curiosity, sip and taste occasionally from *any under* current. They will examine a new version and compare particular passages both with the Original, and with the *other* translations, and probably like those best, which have the most scrupulous fidelity; as we had rather contemplate an exact, tho' hard resemblance of a dear old Friend, than one which softens and melts down every defect, substituting grace and beauty for imitative precision.

"Those who will read the work *thro'* and value it for *itself*, to whom Greek is a dead letter, form a prodigious majority among poetic Readers; and they of *that* class, who have the keenest sensibility of poetic beauty, will never be induced to read an English Homer which is poetically inferior to Pope's. Their opinion will bias those who have less power of judging for themselves, and leave the Rivals of that immortal work only the barren and mortifying consciousness of wasted time and fruitless labour.

"Mr. Day, who was a grounded Greek scholar, and a fine Poet himself, always maintained that *Pope's* Homer was, as *poetry*, very superior to its Original, by exalting all that there is low, animating what is tedious, and equalling in strength as well as beauty almost all the noblest passages of the old Bard; so as to leave him no transcendency except what results from the grander intonation of the Greek language, and from the absence of rhyme. Milton and Pope's numbers, however, always render our language sufficiently grand and harmonious to satisfy and to charm every ear, the delicacy of which is not become morbid.

"To the admired simile with which the latter closes the 8th book of the 'Iliad,' I have considerable objection—not because it adds to, and extends the ideas of the Greek passage, not because it is finer poetry, but because it uses epithets too gorgeous for just delineation, and is therefore not faithful to *Nature*—'*Refulgent* lamp of Night;'

> Then *shine* the vales, the rocks in prospect rise,
> A *flood* of *glory* brightens all the skies;—

and before these lines he says:

> Around her throne the *vivid* planets roll
> And stars unnumbered *gild* the *glowing* Pole.

The vales *gleam* but they do not shine beneath the clearest moon-light; and for the most resplendent *Sun-rise* no expression can be found stronger than a *flood of glory*.

"The original and the Translation are alike unfaithful to nature in representing the stellar fires as in *full* lustre when that of the moon is in consummate brightness. A few stars are then sometimes visible, but their light is dim and indistinct. In Milton's lunar evening he says the firmament glowed with living sapphires till the moon unveiled her peerless light, (peer-

less by that of any *Star*) and threw her silver mantle over the dark. The lines of Pope's Homer which the simile introduces are *exquisite* and faultless; the war-fires on Xanthus' brink illuminating his waters;—their long-cast reflection gleaming on the walls, and trembling on the spires of Troy;—their gilding the dusky horrors and shooting a *shady* lustre over the fields!—if all this be not *Homer*, it is first-rate *poetry*. Paraphrastic license in translation gives it the raciness of original composition.

"I am tempted to the egotism of inserting a moon-light landscape of my *own* from an unfinished Epic Poem, built in wide paraphrase upon Fenelon's 'Telemachus,' which in itself contains few poetic essentials. It forms but the mere *outline* of my attempt, which has lain many years unprogressive, and as yet consists of only 3 books:

Soft as he[1] sleeps, the now consummate moon
Sheds lambent glories on the night's still noon.
Where the horizon's limitary line
Meets the gloom'd sea, and seems its last confine,
Serene, she stands, diffusing thro' hush'd waves
Her lunar morning in the Ocean caves;

[1] *Telemachus.*

And, as from sportive Boy, descending prone,
Sinks in the glassy pool the heavy stone,
Wave gains on wave, while the smooth lake divides
Widening, in convex spheres, the lucid tides,
So in the sky, divergent from her orb,
The skirts of milky light the dusk absorb;
Flush round and round, and softly flush again,
Kindling alike th' horizon and the main;
While a gemm'd path the darksome waters o'er,
Streams from her silver circlet to the shore.

Sleepless Calypso roves and feels the stings
That doubtful hope to new-born passion brings;
She roves, what time, ascending from the Deep,
Climbs the fair Moon the dusk ethereal steep.
Her beams the summits of the rocks illume,
Hills, glens, and fields steal faintly thro' the gloom;
Blue gleam the brooks, irriguous vales among,
Their mists slow curling as they wind along,
And dew-sprent meadows, more distinctly seen
Tho' lost the floral hues and lively green
Which drank the lustre of the gaudy day,
Now glistening, whiten in the *milder* ray;
More light and more th' emergent landscape gains,
Till all the scene in pale distinctness reigns.

"I remain, Sir, your obliged Servant,
"ANNA SEWARD."

Mr. Day was Thomas Day, the author of "Sandford and Merton," of whom Miss Seward wrote a short biography.

It was then that Mr. Lloyd sent the Twenty-fourth Book. In April, 1808, Miss Seward replied, almost to the length of the poem:—

"Tardy, as to my esteemed Correspondent this acknowledgement of his obliging present must appear, it is yet the earliest which, from a heavy press of engagements, and literary intercourse by pen, it has been in my *power* to make.

"Whatever I may think concerning *waste* of ability in any present attempt to translate Homer since Cowper has shown us what he *is*, and Pope what, as a *complete* Poet, he should have been, still I confess the exertion and the execution very extraordinary, and very ingenious, considering it as made in advanced life, and by a Gentleman whose attention and whose labours were, thro' his youth and middle life, thrown into paths widely distant from the classic and poetic haunts.

"When you observe that after a *first* reading of Homer, abreast with his consummate Translator, a man of taste and genius would prefer the English to the Greek Poem, you say

everything for Pope; and when you add but let that same man read Homer ten times, and he will find Homer rise and Pope sink, it is in fact only that prejudice prevails over fair comparison. The ear becomes so seduced, so fascinated by the charms of a language, much more sonorous than our own, that the flattest and coarsest passages, passing thro' that harmonious medium, delight the beguiled fancy more than the purest poetry in our own less magnificent tongue. We all know how fond even the mere Editor becomes of the Author whose works he studies and gives to the World. Upon the Translator that partiality comes with treble force and accumulation, till, like the passionate Lover, he either becomes blind to the defects of his Idol, or fancies them excellencies.

"Pope separates the dross from the gold of Homer, and for the dross substitutes intrinsic gems. Of this Homer's Idolators complain; but if these gems be of *the purest*, as well as of the *brightest* lustre; if they be pearls and diamonds, and not tinsel and glass; if they convey picture and imagery, life and motion, in the place of plain narrative, or perhaps unin-

teresting mention, then surely it must be *partial* taste which likes the poetry *best* which is *least poetic*. Why then read it in English verse at all? Why not prefer the literal prose translation? *That* is the *plain food*. All poetry, which deserves its name, is certainly, to pursue your figure, a *made dish*, composed of various ingredients—of allegory, metaphor, simile, portraiture, scenery, bold and grand thoughts and sentiments, hyperbole, within proper bounds, and all conveyed in the "high-enwoven harmonies" of verse, blank, or in rhyme.

"I do not understand what is meant by *Modern Poetry*, as degradingly spoken. *If* the *best* of our Poets' composition since Dryden and Pope to the present hour, they are a Host in *strength*, *beauty*, and number, and have written in all manner of styles. For the magnificent, we have Akenside, Thomson, Collins, Dr. Johnson, Mason, Gray, Chatterton, Darwin—and the sublime Joanna Baillie; in the *simpler* style, Shenstone, Beattie, Cowper, Crowe, Bowles, Burns, Bloomfield, Walter Scott, and his school; Coleridge, Southey, and *their* school. Poetry can have no nobler models than these supply to her various styles. Modern

Poetry in all ages, must, in justice, be *so* termed beneath the consideration of its *greatest* examples; not by the herd of Poetasters, who pour their trash from the Press, with and without rhyme, and have *so* poured it from Chaucer's day to our own.

"Ill betide the Dealers in metre who, after the manner of the English Della-Cruscans, Merry, and his Imitators, exhibit ideas of laborious inflation, unnatural conceits, incongruous metaphors, and violent hyperbole, and, dressing them up in *well-sounding* numbers, called the trash *Poetry*.

"Pope was not of that Tribe, neither any of his brother-Bards whom I have mentioned. Of *him*, and of *them*, it may be justly said, that however they may differ from each other in their preference of the magnificent or the plainer diction, their works glow with the strong light of Genius, such as is able to pierce the clouds of Time, and of contemporary jealousy, and to make their fame go bright'ning on its course to distant ages.

"You give Pope involuntary acquittal for making Homer's prose *poetry*, at least respecting his catalogue of the Grecian ships, when

you say you found the impossibility of translating it without following his example. Why then reflect on him for *setting* it? Certainly his local enumeration is one of the most beautiful parts of his version. It shows what genius and judgment can do with the most *barren* materials. Do you blame him for ransacking dictionaries, as you term it, to acquire an accurate knowledge of the situation and properties of the places he *must* mention, that so *truth* might support his landscape-painting?

"Their mere calling over, as in Homer, must have made fine Bell-man's verses, truly, in English; as it is managed in Pope's Homer, the Reader must be an owl, if he does not *see* the Country, or City mentioned, rise before him, and feel himself, not only entertained, but instructed concerning the situation and produce for which it is most remarkable. *We* are thus spared the trouble of *ransacking dictionaries*, if we were disposed to take it. Pope was *obliged* to translate this catalogue, and since you allow there is no possibility of doing it in *plain* rhythm, pray pardon him that he bowed to the *necessity* of making it poetry.

"My criticisms on your 24th Iliad would

only waste your time and mine in fruitless consideration, since we should investigate on an entirely different principle. That which appears to me defect in *all* verse, viz. that it is not *poetry*, appears to you a plainness which is desirable. I am very far indeed from considering stilted language, unsupported by the essentials of poetry, as admirable; poverty of ideas "gaily tricked out in gaudy raggedness" is no reading for me while affluence of imagination, in the simplest language, *charms* me. No verse was ever more enchanting to me than Southey's 'Madoc.' Pope's Homer is not *so* dear. Every page of the former presents to me some noble sentiment, some vivid image, that while it tempts the pencil transcends its power; some impassioned tenderness that sinks into the heart.

"In the 24th Iliad of yours one of the couplets is highly poetic,

> But when Aurora, bright with rosy dyes,
> Rose in *full glory* up the vaulted skies,

yet it seems the description of the *consummate* day rather than of that early morning, so dis-

criminated in Pope's translation of the same lines:

> Soon as Aurora, daughter of the dawn,
> With rosy lustre *streak'd* the dewy lawn.

Your couplet has all the harmony and the brilliance, but not the temporal appropriation of Pope's. The words *streak'd* and *dewy* mark the hour immediately succeeding the dawn of twilight. That happy precision is one of the principal excellencies of Pope's poetry. So is it of Southey's, whose *style* is so different from *his*. Of mere *style*, so it be not coarse or mean, I make little point. If the poetic essentials exist, I am indifferent whether I meet them in the simple robe, which folds round a statue, like the dress of Southey's muse, or in the floating, purple, and gemm'd tiara which invests that of Pope.

"Amongst his many landscapes, I know of only one which wants appropriation, nay absolutely violates it, and that, as I mentioned to you before, is his *celebrated* close of the 8th 'Iliad.'

"By its recollection I was induced to send you a moon-light view of mine, flattering myself that it possesses that truth to nature which

Pope's wants. You tell me you think the lines 'too poetic, too highly polished, which tends to obscure their meaning.' How descriptive poetry can be too poetic, I have no idea. Obscurity of meaning is certainly one of the worst faults verse can have. [Four lines of the letter are here cut away. They seem to have consisted of a defence of the directness and accuracy of the description previously quoted, on p. 205, of the lunar evening on the sea shore.] No circumstance is in my scene, which I had not literally beheld on the preceding night.

"Upon reading your objections, I reexamined the passage with deep attention, and put it to the ordeal, which I long since instituted for the detection of ambiguous meaning in poetry, viz. throwing it into prose. Be it, however, remembered, that *verbal transposition* is an allowed poetic license, and is asserted to produce a fine classical effect in English poetry. The French language will not bear it, and hence its poetry never rises above *the pretty*, and *the elegant*.

"Whoever fancies that verbal transposition obscures the sense in *our* verse, must possess

the lynx's beam if he can discern it in the Greek and Latin, where that habit of style is perpetual and in an infinitely greater latitude than is ever ventured upon by our Poets, even by Milton, the boldest and most extensive of all his Brethren in the use of that privilege. I might have excepted Spenser; but as I am not one of that Poet's indiscriminate admirers, I would not follow him as an example nor cite him as authority.

"It appears to me that my lines are acquitted of the imputed obscurity by the experiment made upon them. I inclose it for your perusal, and remain, Sir, with much respect and regard

[Signature cut away.]

"LICHFIELD, April 11, 1808."

On the following page is the paraphrase, introduced thus:—

"A passage in Anna Seward's unpublished and unfinished Poem, 'Telemachus,' put into Prose, as a *criterion* whether or not the description be obscure. All the verbal variations are synonisms, substituted to take it out of rhyme and measure:"—

The moon, now consummate, sheds her lambent glories over the still noon of Midnight. Where the limitary line of the horizon meets the gloomed sea, and appears its last boundary, she stands serene, diffusing thro' the hush'd billows her lunar morning into the caverns of the Deep. And, as, from sportive Boy, prone descending sinks into the glassy pool the ponderous stone, wave gains upon wave, while the lake separates, widening the lucid tides[1] into convex spheres, so in the sky, divergent on all sides from her orbit, skirts of milky light absorb the surrounding darkness, flush round and round, then again gently flush, kindling at once the horizon and the ocean, while over the darksome waters, a gemmed path streams from her silvery circlet to the edge of the shore.

Sleepless Calypso wanders, and feels the stings which doubtful hope brings to new-born passion. She wanders, what time, ascending from the billows, the fair Moon climbs the dusky ethereal steep. Her beams illuminate the summits of the rocks and hills. Glens and fields steal faintly thro' the dusk. The brooks gleam blue amid irriguous vallies, their mists curling slowly as they wind away; and dew-sprent meadows, yet more clearly discerned, tho' lost the lively green, and floral tints which drank the light of the gaudy day, now glistening, whiten in the milder effulgence. More and yet more light the emergent landscape receives, till the whole scene reigns in pale distinctness.

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[1] "There is no obscurity or contradiction [wrote Miss Seward] in giving the name of tides to smooth and currentless waters, because the Poets have united to apply that term to water of every description—calm tide, glassy tide, smooth tide, &c."

This, surely, is word-painting. One leaves Miss Seward with a fuller sense of Scott's embarrassments as her literary executor.

In another kind was Southey's practical and characteristic reply to Mr. Lloyd:—

"Keswick, June 15, 1808.

"I am much obliged to you, Sir, for your translation of the last Book of the 'Iliad.' It would be a highly respectable version from any hand, and must be considered as a very extraordinary one for one who has not been long practised in the art of versifying.

"In writing verse myself I seldom or never elongate a word to three syllables which is commonly and naturally pronounced as two. It appears to me that any such attenuation of sound weakens the rhythm of the line—for instance, you have written,

How brave he was, how generous and true:

this line is far less sonorous than another in which the same word is used as a dissyllable—

Thy form, thy countenance and generous mind.

So also

Pelides satiate at length with grief:

the sound of the line would be strengthened if the word 'satisfied' were substituted.

"On the other hand, such a word as *askest* cannot be made into a monosyllable (tho' certainly it is often done) without producing a harsh and unpleasant effect. You have authority enough in both cases, but the ear is the best and only sure criterion, and whenever that is disappointed of the full sound which it expects, or is jarred by a harsh one which it does not expect, unless the passage itself affords an especial reason for the variety, the line may be pronounced faulty.

"The couplet is to me a wearying measure, and I have sometimes found that the *terza rima* of the Italians might with great advantage be used in its stead, in the translation of Homer, Virgil, or any of the classical narrative poets. Stanzas cannot be used, because they require a regular length of period not to be found in the original: the *terza rima* would have all the charm of rhyme, with the advantage of continuousness. The common quatrain might also be written continuously, after the example of Mason, and it was the opinion of Dryden that this was the noblest English metre. I differ

from him—but the opinion of Dryden on such a subject is a weighty one.

"It has often been doubted whether literature be the worthy occupation of a man's life. I believe it is, and have acted accordingly. But it can never be doubted that it is the worthiest amusement of leisure, after the business of life is done.

"Believe me,

"Yours with respect,

"ROBERT SOUTHEY."

Among other persons to whom a copy of the translation was sent was Thomas Clarkson, the abolitionist, who, working with William Wilberforce, found a strong ally in Mr. Lloyd. Clarkson differed from Miss Seward: "I have read your Homer," he wrote, "with much pleasure, liking it better than that of either Pope or of Cowper."

Lamb did not see the translation until 1809, after Robert's visit to town; but when it did reach him it interested him greatly, and he plunged with kindly energy into criticism. His first letter to Mr. Lloyd on the subject, dated June 13, 1809, began thus:—

"DEAR SIR,—I received with great pleasure the mark of your remembrance which you were pleased to send me, the Translation from Homer. You desire my opinion of it. I think it is plainer and more to the purpose than Pope's, though it may want some of his Splendour and some of his Sound. Yet I do not remember in any part of his translation a series of more manly versification than the conference of Priam with Hermes in your translation (Lines 499 to 530), or than that part of the reply of Achilles to Priam, beginning with the fable of the Two Urns (in page 24); or than the Story of Niobe which follows a little after. I do not retain enough of my Greek (to my shame I say it) to venture at an opinion of the correctness of your version. What I seem to miss, and what certainly everybody misses in Pope, is a certain savage-like plainness of speaking in Achilles—a sort of indelicacy—the heroes in Homer are not half civilized, they utter all the cruel, all the selfish, all the *mean thoughts* even of their nature, which it is the fashion of our great men to keep in. I cannot, in lack of Greek, point to any one place—but I remember the general feature as I

read him at school. But your principles and turn of mind would, I have no doubt, lead you to *civilize* his phrases, and sometimes to *half christen* them."

[Here Lamb's letter, which then comes to particulars, might be interrupted to quote one of the passages he best liked, the conference of Priam with Hermes :—

The old man answer'd—"If thou truly art
Of fierce Achilles' family a part,
Tell me, oh tell, if noble Hector lies
Still in the tent, depriv'd of obsequies;
Or has Achilles in an evil hour,
Thrown him to dogs in piece-meal to devour?"
The swift-wing'd messenger replied and said,
"Neither the vultures nor the dogs have made
A prey of Hector's corpse, which lies yet sound
Within the tent, neglected on the ground.
Twelve mornings now are past since he was slain,
But still the skin its freshness doth retain;
The worms, which make of warriors dead a prey,
From this dead body have been kept away;
Our chief, when morning brightens up the skies,
The noble Hector to his chariot ties,
And drags him round his dear Patroclus' tomb;
But still the dead retains his youthful bloom:
The blood all washed away, no stains appear,
The numerous wounds are clos'd, the skin is clear;

Thus round thy son, the care of heaven is spread,
It loved him living, and it guards him dead."
These words reviv'd the aged king, who said,
"'Tis right that sacrifice and gifts be paid
To the immortals, and the pious mind
Of noble Hector ever was inclin'd
To honour them, while here he drew his breath:
And hence have they remember'd him in death.
Accept for all the kindness thou hast shown,
This golden cup, and keep it as thine own,
And if it please thee, with the gods' consent,
Conduct me safely to Achilles' tent."

The letter continued]: "I have marked a few verbal slips, the doing of which cannot be called criticism, or it is as if a Reviewer being taken ill, his printer's Compositor or Reader were called to supply his place."

Many of the suggestions that follow are too slight to bear reproduction; but many, again, have life, and vigourous life, of their own. Textual criticism was an art in which Lamb pre-eminently shone. Thus:—"Lines 243, 244, 245 are the flattest lines in the whole:

But now *be open*, and *declare thy mind*,
For I *confess I feel myself inclined*,

*Indeed impell'd* by Jove's command to go,
And face the man the cause of all our woe—"[1]

is the cool language of a Man and his Wife upon ordinary occurrences over a peaceable fireside—not the waverings of a divinely-impelled, humanly-shrinking, Priam striving to bolster up his own half-doubting inspirations by infusing a courage which he does not feel into the aged partner of his throne, that she may give it back to him. I should not have exprest myself thus petulantly, if there were many more, or indeed any more such Lines in the Translation, but they stopt the current of my feeling in the place, and I hope you will pardon my expressions."

Here are other comments referring to *παιδοφόνοιο* in the line (506)

*ἀνδρὸς παιδοφόνοιο ποτὶ στόμα χεῖρ' ὀρέγεσθαι.*

Lamb wrote: "I don't know Homer's word, not having my books about me, but surely in English, Priam would have said the *Slayer* of

[1] Iliad xxiv, 196–9:

*Ἀλλ' ἄγε μοι τόδε εἰπὲ, τί τοι φρεσὶν εἴδεται εἶναι;*
*αἰνῶς γάρ μ' αὐτόν γε μένος καὶ θυμὸς ἀνώγει*
*κεῖσ' ἰέναι ἐπὶ νῆας ἔσω στρατὸν εὐρὺν Ἀχαιῶν.*

my *Son*, not call'd Achilles *murderer*, at such a time. That is rather too plain for the homely-speaking Homeric Heroes." Again, Mr. Lloyd had translated *τύμβον* in the line (666)

*ἐνδεκάτῃ δέ κε τύμβον ἐπ' αὐτῷ ποιησαιμεν,*

and *σῆμα* in lines 799 and 801, "tumulus." Lamb objected: "Tumulus is too much like *making Homer talk Latin.* Tumulus is always spoken by an English mouth with a consciousness of *scientific attainment.* Priam and his People were no scholars—plain downright fighting men."

And of Mr. Lloyd's use of the word "minstrels" for Homer's *ἀοιδοὺς* (singers), in the line (720)

*τρητοῖς ἐν λεχεέσσι θέσαν, παρὰ δ'εἶσαν ἀοιδοὺς*

his critic said: "Minstrels, I suspect to be a word bringing merely English or English ballad feelings to the Mind. It expresses the thing and something more, as to say Sarpedon was a Gentleman, or as somebody translated Paul's address 'Ye men of Athens,' 'Gentlemen of Athens.'"

Lamb concluded: "I am sure I ought to

make many apologies for the freedom I have taken, but it will at least convince you that I have read the Book—which I have twice, and the last time with more pleasure, because more at leisure. I wish you Joy of an Amusement which I somehow seem to have done with. Excepting some Things for Children, I have scarce chimed ten couplets in the last as many years. Be pleased to give my most kind remembrances to Mrs. Lloyd; and please to tell Robert that my Sister is getting well, and I hope will soon be able to take pleasure in his affectionate Epistle. My Love also to Charles, when you write.

"I am, Sir, with the greatest [the last few words, including signature, have been cut away.]

"13 June, 09, Temple

"Robert will have told you how pleased I was with your truly Horatian Epistle in the *Gent. Mag.*"

The truly Horatian Epistle was a translation of the first Epistle of the First Book, "To Mæcenas," contributed by Mr. Lloyd, as part of a series, to the *Gentleman's Magazine* for

March, 1809. To his Horatian experiments we come, however, later.

To the foregoing letter the translator seems to have replied, taking exception to some of his critic's remarks; but asking him for similar advice in the future. Lamb's answer came quickly:—

"DEAR SIR,—I can only say that I shall be most happy to see anything that you can send me at any time that has reference to your newly taken up pursuits. I will faithfully return the Manuscript with such observations as a mere acquaintance with English, and with English Poetry, may suggest. I dare not dictate in Greek. I am *Homo unius linguæ*—your vindication of the Lines which I had objected to makes me ashamed of the unimportance of my remarks: they were not worth confuting. Only on Line 33, Page 4, I still retain my opinion that it should be 'were made.'

> All seem'd to wish that such attempt were made,
> Save Juno, Neptune, and the blue-ey'd maid.[1]

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[1] Mr. Lloyd had written:

> All seem'd to wish that such attempt be made,
> Save Juno, Neptune, and the blue-eye'd maid.

I am glad to see you venture *made* and *maia* for rhymes 'Tis true their sound is the same. But the mind occupied in revolving the different meaning of two words so literally the same, is diverted from the objection which the mere Ear would make, and to the mind it is rhyme enough I had not noticed it till this moment of transcribing the couplet. A timidity of Rhyming, whether of bringing together sounds too near, or too remote to each other, is a fault of the present day. The old English poets were richer in their diction, as they were less scrupulous.[1] I shall expect your MS. with curiosity

"I am, Sir,

"Yours with great respect,

"C. LAMB."

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[1] Christopher Wordsworth thought otherwise concerning loose rhyming. In a letter to Robert Mr. Lloyd wrote: "Wordsworth thinks my translation of the 24th book of the 'Iliad' does me credit, and is very faithful to the original; but he is too nice about rhymes—he thinks 'steal' and 'prevail' do not quite suit. I believe the Londoners pronounce 'steal' 'steel,' but we pronounce it 'stale'—however there are very few rhymes of this kind. What would he say to Pope, who uses 'prepare'
'ear,' &c. &c. ?

But there is more nicety in verse now than there was 50 years ago."

"My kind remembrances to Robert. I shall soon have a little parcel to send him. I am very sorry to hear of the ill-health of Sophia.

"Temple, 19 June, 09."

# XIII

## MR. LLOYD'S "ODYSSEY"

### 1809–1810

THE little parcel to which Lamb referred in his postscript came in due course—the "Poetry for Children"—and with it the following note, which tells us that Mr. Lloyd, taking his critic at his word, had sent the manuscript of his version of the first two books of the "Odyssey" for Lamb's consideration. Lamb's note, which is undated but belongs to 1809, ran :—

"DEAR ROBERT,—Make my apologies to your father for not returning his 'Odyssey' sooner, but I lent it to a friend who is a better Grecian than me, to make remarks on, and he has been so busied (he is a Doctor of Laws) that I have rescued the MSS. from him at last by force. He has written a few observations. I send you our poems. All mine are marked √ in the contents. The rest are Mary's, all but the 'Beggar Man,' which is my brother's. The

farce is not at home, but you shall have it ere long.—What follows is for your Father to see. —Mary desires her remembrances."

Lamb then introduced his little sheaf of suggestions with this modest note to Mr. Lloyd:—

"DEAR SIR,—A friend who has kept your MS. unreasonably long has ventured a few remarks on the first Book. And I have twice read thro' both with care, and can only reprehend a few trifling expressions with my scanty knowledge of Greek. I thank you for the reading of them, and assure you they read to me beautifully simple and in the manner of the original as far as I understand it.

"Yours truly,
"C. L.

"My kind respects to Mrs. Lloyd."

A few of Lamb's emendations follow, most of which Mr. Lloyd adopted when he came to print.

Mr. Lloyd at first had rendered (Book I. line 8) *βοῦς Ἡελίοιο* "Bullocks of the Sun." Thus

Lamb:—"Oxen of the Sun, I conjure. Bullocks is too Smithfield and sublunary a Word. Oxen of the Sun, or of Apollo, but in any case not Bullocks." Again, Mr. Lloyd had written (Book I. line 69):—

The Cyclops' Eye still rankles in his breast.

Lamb remarked: "'The Cyclops' Eye still rankles in his Breast.' Here is an unlucky confusion of literal with figurative language. One Man's *Eye* rankles in another *Breast*. 'Cyclops' wrongs' would do better."

For Homer's δαῖτρὸς and κῆρυξ (Book I. lines 141, 143) Mr. Lloyd offered Cook and Butler. "These sound," said Lamb, "too modern-kitchenish. One might be called an officer or servitor, the other a server. Milton speaks of these things as the office mean 'of sewer and seneschall."[1] Perhaps sewer is too old. But Cook and Butler are too like modern Establishments."

Passing over several minor corrections, we come to this sound objection to Mr. Lloyd's

[1] "Paradise Lost," Book IX., 37:—

Marshall'd feast,
Serv'd up in hall with sewers and seneschals.

employment of a flagrant modernism: "Unaffected Grace. Is there any word in Homer to express *affectation?* I think not. Then certainly he has no such idea as *unaffected.*"

The "friend's" remarks, which accompany Lamb's, are less piquantly expressed.

A few days later, probably on the receipt of a reply from Mr. Lloyd, Lamb wrote more fully concerning this particular translation, and translations of Homer in general:—

"July 31, 1809.

"Dear Sir,—The general impression made by your Translation on the mind of my friend, who kept your MS. so unreasonably long, as well as on another friend who read over a good part of it with me, was that it gave a great deal more of the sense of Homer than either of his two great modern Translators have done. In several expressions which they at first objected to, on turning to the Greek they found it completely warranted you in the use of them; and they were even surprised that you could combine so much fidelity with so much of the turn of the best modern improvements in the Couplet versification. I think of

the two, I rather prefer the Book of the Iliad which you sent me, for the sound of the verse; but the difference of subject almost involuntarily modifies verse. I find Cowper is a favourite with nobody. His injudicious use of the stately slow Miltonic verse in a subject so very different has given a distaste. Nothing can be more unlike to my fancy than Homer and Milton. Homer is perfect prattle, tho' exquisite prattle, compared to the deep oracular voice of Milton. In Milton you love to stop, and saturate your mind with every great image or sentiment; in Homer you want to go on, to have more of his agreeable narrative. Cowper delays you as much, walking over a Bowling Green, as the other does, travelling over steep Alpine heights, where the labour enters into and makes a part of the pleasure. From what I have seen, I would certainly be glad to hear that you continued your employment quite through the Poem: that is, for an agreeable and honourable recreation to yourself; though I should scarce think that (Pope having got the ground) a translation in Pope's Couplet versification would ever supersede his to the public, however faithfuller or in some

respects better. Pitt's Virgil is not much read, I believe, though nearer to the Original than Dryden's. Perhaps it is, that people do not like two Homers or Virgils—there is a sort of confusion in it to an English reader, who has not a centre of reference in the Original: when Tate and Brady's Psalms came out in our Churches, many pious people would not substitute them in the room of David's, as they call'd Sternhold and Hopkins's. But if you write for a relaxation from other sort of occupations I can only congratulate you, Sir, on the noble choice, as it seems to me, which you have made, and express my wonder at the facility which you suddenly have arrived at, if (as I suspect) these are indeed the first specimens of this sort which you have produced. But I cannot help thinking that you betray a more practiced gait than a late beginner could so soon acquire. Perhaps you have only resumed, what you had formerly laid aside as interrupting more necessary avocations.

"I need not add how happy I shall be to see at any time what you may please to send me. In particular, I should be glad to see that you had taken up Horace, which I think you enter

into as much as any man that was not born in his days, and in the *Via Longa* or *Flaminia*, or near the *Forum*.

"With many apologies for keeping your MS. so long, which my friend's engagements in business must excuse,

"I remain,

"Dear Sir, yours truly,

"C. L.

"My kind respects to Mrs. Ll., and my remembrances to Robert, &c., &c."

A few months later, early in 1810, Mr. Lloyd had the first seven books of the "Odyssey" printed as a companion to his version of the "Iliad." The title-page of the little book bore no name, but in a prefatory note it was stated that "This attempt to preserve in English rhyme, with little or no embellishment, the noble simplicity of the original, has engaged some of the leisure hours of a man of business, who, till near his sixtieth year, had written a few trifles only in verse, and this circumstance, he hopes, will plead in his excuse for the deficiencies which a critical eye will observe in this volume."

A copy of the translation was speedily despatched to the Temple, and Lamb replied with a further list of suggestions and the following letter :—

"My dear Sir,—The above are all the faults I, who profess myself to be a mere English Reader, could find after a scrupulous perusal twice over of your neat little Book. I assure you it gave me great pleasure in the perusal, much more in this shape than in the Manuscript, and I should be very sorry you should give up the finishing of it on so poor pretence as your *Age* [sixty-two], which is not so much by ten years as Dryden's when he wrote his fables, which are his best works allowed, and not more than Milton's when he had scarce entered upon his original Epic Poem. You have done nearly a third; persevere and let us see the whole. I am sure I should prize it for its Homeric plainness and truth above the confederate jumble of Pope, Broome and Fenton which goes under Pope's name, and is far inferior to his ILIAD. I have picked out what I think blemishes, but they are but a score of words (I am a mere word pecker) in six times

as many pages. The rest all gave me pleasure, and most of all the Book [the Sixth] in which Ulysses and Nausicaa meet. You have infused a kind of biblical patriarchal manner into it, it reads like some story of Jacob and Rachel, or some of those primitive manners. I am ashamed to carp at words, but I did it in obedience to your desires, and the plain reason why I did not acknowledge your kind present *sooner* was that I had no criticisms of value to make. I shall certainly beg the opinion of my friend who read the two first Books on this enlarged Performance. But he is so very much engaged that I cannot at present get at him, and besides him I have no acquaintance that takes much interest in Poetry, Greek or English. But I hope and adjure you to go on and do not make excuses of Age till you have completed the Odyssey, and done a great part of Horace besides. Then you will be entitled to hang up your Harp.

"I am, dear Sir, with Love to all your family,

"Your hble. Serv.,

"C. LAMB.

"10 Mar. 1810, E. I. Ho."

In Mr. Lloyd's translation of the Sixth Book, Nausicaa thus addressed her maidens :—

> Why do ye fly, my maids? why should the sight
> Of this poor man thus fill you with affright?
> He is not like a fierce invading foe,
> Whose savage spirits vigorously flow;
> And we are dear to heaven—the ocean roars
> Around our happy and sequester'd shores:
> With other states no intercourse we hold;
> But can we from this wanderer withhold
> Our friendly aid? The stranger and the poor
> Jove sends for succour to the rich man's door;
> The smallest gift which charity imparts,
> Is like a cordial to their drooping hearts.
> Now wine and food to this poor mortal bring,
> And wash his body in the flowing spring;
> But to some shelter'd, quiet nook repair,
> And guard his shivering limbs from chilling air.

The passage illustrates Lamb's comment. Mr. Lloyd, one might say, Quakerised Homer.

A few of Lamb's suggestions are picked from the list. Mr. Lloyd rendered (Book I., lines 163–5) :—

> *Εἰ κεῖνόν γ' Ἰθάκηνδε ἰδοίατο νοστήσαντα,*
> *πάντες κ' ἀρησαίατ' ἐλαφρότεροι πόδας εἶναι*
> *ἢ ἀφνειότεροι χρυσοῖό τε ἐσθῆτός τε.*

> Should he return, their feet would soon express
> How much swift feet excelled parade of dress.

The comment was:—"'Parade of dress' strikes the ear as too modern; though in reality the modernest English is not more removed from Greek than the ancientest, yet the imagination is unwilling to receive a word in a Translation of Homer which has not the sanction of years."

Again, Mr. Lloyd employed "whelming tide" as an equivalent for (Book I., line 183) *οἴνοπα πόντον*. Said Lamb:—"'Whelming tide.' A bad Epithet. We may speak of Vessels sunk beneath the whelming tide, but hardly of vessels sailing over it. It is a property of the sea to overwhelm, but ships riding over it do not naturally remind one of that property."

Mr. Lloyd used "patriotic." Lamb objected: "*Patriotic* strikes my ears also as too modern. Besides that in English few words of more than three syllables chime well into a verse;" and a similar nicety of feeling for words informed his objection to the phrase "express his sentiments." Lamb called it

"modern and novel phraseology. I mean the phrase of novels. The word sentiment was scarcely Anglicised before the time of Sterne." And when "sentiment" occurred again Lamb wrote: "*Sentiments*—I would root this word out of a translation of Homer. It came in with Sterne, and was a child he had by Affectation."

In the third Book (lines 199–200) Mr. Lloyd rendered:—

> *καὶ σὺ, φίλος—μάλα γάρ σ' ὁρόω καλόν τε μέγαν τε—*
> *ἄλκιμος ἔσσο, ἵνα τίς σε καὶ ὀψιγόνων εὖ εἴπῃ,*
>
> And thou, my friend, of whom I augur well,
> Be brave, and strive in virtue to excel,
> That thy good deeds may live in future days,
> And be reported with deserved praise.

Lamb remarked:—"I doubt if Homer had any such an idea as we have when we talk of *striving to excel in virtue*. I am afraid the phrase is more correspondent to the Telemachus of Fenelon than of Homer. Orestes' revengeful slaughter of Ægisthus is the model to which Nestor directs Telemachus, something different from what we mean by virtue."

The use of "exit" called forth this rebuke:—

"*Exit* is a sad tombstone-word. It is thrice bad: bad as being Latin; as being a word of stage-direction; and as being inscribed on half the tombstones in the Kingdom." Again, when Mr. Lloyd wrote:—

> Envy will pine at such a happy sight
> Benevolence surveys it with delight,
>
> —πόλλ' ἄλγεα δυσμενέεσσιν,
> χάρματα δ' εὐμενέτῃσι· μάλιστα δέ τ' ἔκλυον αὐτοί,

Lamb was severe:—

> "'Envy will pine, &c.
> Benevolence survey it with delight.'

I should suspect these personifications are the Translator's. They sound *post*-Homeric."

Finally there is this objection to the use of the word "uncle:"—"*Uncle*—rather a hazardous word; would you call Pallas his niece? I cannot conceive of such relationships as Uncles and Nieces and Cousins (at least the names of them) among the Gods."

Among other critics of the "Odyssey," Catherine Hutton, the daughter of William Hutton, the antiquary and historian of Bir-

mingham, and the neighbour of Mr. Lloyd, wrote with enthusiasm :—

"Bennett's Hill, June 25 [1810].

"Dear Sir,—I have read your seven Books of the 'Odyssey' with great pleasure, and return you my sincere thanks for the present. I can only repeat my astonishment that a man of your business, public and private, a man with your numerous family and family concerns, could possibly have found time to attain such a knowledge of Greek as was necessary to give us a faithful picture of Homer. As things are, it would be selfish to say I am sorry to leave Ulysses at the court of Alcinous; but if you would allow us to contribute to his travelling expenses, I should be very happy if you would set him down at Ithaca. You give us every minutiæ and no circumlocution." (The end of the letter has been cut away.[1])

[1] Here in spite of its irrelevance, might be quoted a passage from another of Catherine Hutton's infrequent letters to Mr. Lloyd. With reference to Clarkson's "History of the Quakers," a work in which Mr. Lloyd naturally took great interest, she wrote wittily, in 1808: "I have read Clarkson through with great pleasure. Almost he persuades me—not to be a Quaker, but to wish I had been born and bred one." For much interesting matter concerning Catherine Hutton,

Southey expressed himself as follows :—

"KESWICK, December 14, 1810.

"DEAR SIR,—I ought long ago to have thanked you for your little volume. Without comparing the versification to Pope's in point of high finishing, I can truly say that I think it a versification of a better kind—flowing more naturally, less monotonous and therefore less wearying. Charles [Lloyd] I perceive has marked several passages in my copy as imperfect rhymes,—I cannot consider them as blemishes; it is from the French that our critics have learnt to condemn them, and a comparison of their theory of verse with that of other countries would prove that the objection proceeds rather from obtuseness of ear than from delicacy. The only thing I should object to in your lines is when you occasionally pronounce what use has made a mute syllable, for instance :—

Not unobserv*ed* by the noble maid.

There is a license which of late years I have never allowed myself.

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the reader is referred to two books by Mrs. C. H. Beale :—"Reminiscences of a Gentlewoman of the Last Century," and "Catherine Hutton and Her Friends."

"I hope you will find leisure to complete what you have begun. The Odyssey is a delightful poem, and the most delightful parts of it are yet to come. And tho' there is a richness and fulness in the Greek hexameter which no English metre can imitate (and least of all the couplet, which I hold to be the very worst possible metre for narration) yet your version represents Homer more faithfully than either Pope or Cowper: the stiffness of the latter is as unlike the original, as the finery of the former. . . .

"Believe me, Sir,

"Yrs. with true respect,

"Robert Southey."

Mr. Lloyd completed the translation of the "Odyssey" in 1816; but only the first seven books were printed. At the beginning of the manuscript volume which contains the translation the date on which each of the twenty-four books was finished has been recorded by the author. The composition of the 14,591 lines of which they consist extended over a period of eight years.

# XIV

## MR. LLOYD'S "HORACE"

### 1812–1813

ALTHOUGH intent upon Homer, Mr. Lloyd had dallied also with Horace, and in 1812 he issued, for private circulation, a slender volume in boards: "The Epistles of Horace: Translated into English Verse." Six of these renderings had appeared from time to time in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and Lamb, it will be remembered, had complimented Mr. Lloyd upon one of them (see p. 234), and had urged him to continue his Horatian studies.

Hence Mr. Lloyd's volume, when ready, was instantly despatched to London for Lamb's opinion. Lamb replied forthwith:—

"INDIA HOUSE, Tuesday, 8 Sep., 1812.

"DEAR SIR,—I return you thanks for your little Book. I am no great Latinist, but you appear to me to have very happily caught the

Horatian manner. Some of them I had seen before. What gave me most satisfaction has been the 14th Epistle (its easy and Gentleman-like beginning, particularly), and perhaps next to that, the Epistle to Augustus, which reads well even after Pope's delightful Imitation of it. What I think the least finish'd is the 18th Epistle. It is a metre which never gave me much pleasure.[1] I like your *eight* syllable verses very much. They suit the Epistolary style quite as well as the *ten*. I am only sorry not to find the Satires in the same volume. I hope we may expect them. I proceed to find some few oversights, if you will indulge me, or what seem so to me, for I have neglected my Latin (and quite lost my Greek) since I left construing it at School. I will take them as I find them mark'd in order."

But here, before turning to the textual comments, may be quoted the Epistle which best pleased the critic—the Fourteenth :—

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[1] This is the metre :—

If rightly I know thee, thou wilt not offend,
My Lollius, by flattery, the ears of a friend.

### TO MY STEWARD

Steward of my woods and self-restoring farm,
(Despised by thee) which formerly was warm
With five bright fires—a place of some renown,
Which sent five Senators to Varia's town;
Let us contend, who is the most inclined,
I to pluck up the thorns which choak the mind,
Or thou the thorns which my estate molest;
And whether Horace or his farm thrive best.
Lamia has lost his brother, and my grief
For him who mourns, despairing of relief,
Detains me here, tho' there my heart and soul
Bear me impatient of undue controul.
I call the country, thou the town-man blest;
He hates his own, who others' lots likes best:
The place is blamed unjustly, for we find
That change of place can never change the mind;
At Rome by others hurried here and there,
Thou for the country didst prefer thy prayer;
My steward now, thy fickle heart resorts
Again to Rome, its bagnios, and its sports;
While I, consistent with myself, pursue
One steady plan, and this thou know'st is true;
And when by hateful business forced to move
To Rome, I leave with grief the farm I love:
Our inclinations differ—hence we see
That I and thou must ever disagree;
For what thou call'st a wild deserted waste,
Exactly suits my own and others' taste.
Who hate what thou applaudest;—filthy stews
And greasy taverns, suit thy low life views

Of city happiness.—A rural scene,
Where spices grow, not grapes, thou thinkest
mean;
No tavern near which can its wine supply;
No dancing songsters to allure the eye
And charm the ear; yet, if thy tale be true,
Thou dost not fail thy business to pursue;
To plough my fallows overrun with weeds,
And strip the leaves on which my bullock feeds;
To watch the river when the showers descend,
And currents rippling thro' the fields to tend.
Come now; I'll tell thee why we disagree;
Fine clothes and hair perfumed delighted me.
Rapacious Cynara I once could please
Without a fee, with pleasantry and ease;
In rich Falernian wine I took delight,
And often sat till very late at night;
Now I eat little and but little drink,
I sleep delighted near the river's brink,
On the soft grass.—I can't recall the past,
But I should blush, did youthful follies last.
Safe in the country, there no envious spy
Views my possessions with a jaundiced eye;
No biting slander and no secret hate
Approach the confines of my small estate;
The clods and stones I carry from my ground,
My neighbours see me, and the smile goes round,
To sit with slaves is thy delight and pride,
At a large city table well supplied;
With them thou wishest thy abode to fix,
And in their meals and merriment to mix;

While my more active footboy longs to change
Places with thee, and o'er my fields to range;
The flocks, the garden, and the wood heap'd fire,
Despised by thee, excite his fond desire;
The lazy ox, the horse's trappings saw
With longing eye—the horse the plough would draw;
But as in different stations they excel,
Each cheerfully should act his own part well.

The first of Lamb's criticisms refers to a passage in the Sixth Epistle (Book I.) "To Numicus:"—

Virtutem verba putas et
Lucum ligna?

which Mr. Lloyd had rendered thus:—

Think'st thou that virtue is composed of words,
As some men think a grove composed of boards?

Lamb objected:—"I do not quite like rendering *ligna*, *boards*. I take the passage to allude to the religious character of their groves, and that Horace means to say, If you are one who think virtue to be mere words, and account no more of a grove (that is, of a consecrated place) than of so much timber.—As I should say, if you look upon a Church as only so

much brick and mortar, *i.e.* divested of its sacred character. I don't know if I am right —but *boards* sound awkward to me: *timber* I think should be the word. Timber is a word we apply to wood dead or alive. Boards only to the dead wood."

The next reference is to the Seventh Epistle (Book I.) "To Mæcenas." Mr. Lloyd had converted Horace's

> Dum pueris omnis pater et matercula pallet,
> Officiosaque sedulitas et opella forensis
> Adducit febres et testamenta resignat

to

> Now fathers and mothers are pale for their boys,
> And the forum's engagements, its bustle and noise,
> And officious attention, together combine
> To bring fevers, which cause us our wills to resign.

Lamb wrote:—"*Our wills to resign* is literally the rendering of *testamenta resignare*—and would it not also as aptly apply to *voluntates deponere?* The resignation of the will in an hour of sickness gives one a Christian idea. At all events, resign should have been written re-sign, which would have precluded the Ambiguity."

Again, Mr. Lloyd thus opened the Epistle to Aristius Fuscus (Book I., 10) :—

> We who a country life enjoy,
> Whom rural pleasures never cloy,
> Wish health and peace may always crown
> Our Fuscus, who prefers the town;
> For tho' in this we disagree,
> We feel like twins a sympathy
> In other things;—what one refuses,
> The other does, and so he chooses;
> Of the old Dove thou keep'st the nest
> While I (and think myself more blest)
> Extol the scenes which nature yields,
> Rivers which flow thro' verdant fields,

and so on. Lamb commented :—"'Of the old dove thou keep'st the nest.' Turning to the original, I find it 'vetuli notique columbi. *Tu* nidum servas, *ego*,' &c., which I have always translated a pair of old and well acquainted Doves, one of us (*you*) keep to your nest, the other (I) praise the Country. I have always taken columbi to be plural and to refer to *Tu et ego*. Referring to Creech, I find he translates it as I would."

In translating "Libertino natum patre" in the Epistle "To His Book" (Book I., 20), Mr.

Lloyd had written "From a father libertine descended." Lamb demurred to this:—"I don't know whether *libertine* in our unhappy perversion of the meaning would be any great compliment to the memory of a parent. In English it always means a person of loose morals, though by transposing the order of the words you have perhaps obviated the objection. A *libertine father* would have shock'd the ear. The transposition leads us to the Latin meaning, by making us pause a little. I believe this is a foolish objection." Horace's own meaning for the word was, of course, a "freed man."

Lamb continued:—"You have two or three times translated 'solennis' by 'solemn.' Has not the English word acquired a gravity and religion, which the Latin did not intend?" Lamb then cited two instances. One was in the Epistle "To Mæcenas" (Book I., 1), where the translator rendered "Insanire putas solemnia me," "Thou think'st me then quite solemnly unsound." Lamb commented thus:—"'Solemnly unsound'—does 'solemnia insanire' mean anything more than to be mad with leave of custom—to be orderly or warrantably mad?"

The other instance was in the Epistle "To Augustus" (Book II., 1), where

> Romæ dulce diu fuit et sollemne reclusa
> Mane domo vigilare

became

> 'Twas long a custom sanctioned at Rome,
> To spend the morning solemnly at home.

Lamb remarked:—"'To spend the morning solemnly at home.' Does 'solenne fuit' mean anything more than that it was customary or habitual with them to stay at home? Our *solemn* is applied only *directly* to forms of religious or grave occasions, as a solemn hymn or funeral; and *indirectly* or ironically to grave stupid people—as a solemn coxcomb—which latter I am afraid you will think me for being so verbose on a trifling objection."

One other correction. Mr. Lloyd, in the same Epistle, had rendered "socco" "buskins." Lamb pointed out:—"It should have been rendered by the word *sock*, which refers to Comedy. The Cothurnus or Buskin was the high-rais'd shoe of the *tragic* actor."

The letter concluded:—"Let me only add

that I hope you will continue an employment which must have been so delightful to you. That it may have the power of stealing you occasionally from some sad thoughts is my fervent wish and hope. Pray, Dear Sir, give my kindest remembrances to Mrs. Lloyd, and to Plumstead—I am afraid I can add no more who are likely to remember me. Charles and I sometimes correspond. He is a letter in my debt." (The remainder of the letter is torn away.)

Two other letters referring to the "Horace" are worthy of quotation. This, from Catherine Hutton, is terse and sensible:—

BENNETT'S HILL, NOV. 10 [1812].

"DEAR SIR,—I beg you will accept my sincere thanks for your book. I own I felt disappointed that it was not Homer; but I am now glad it is Horace. I have read it to my Father, who is much pleased with it, and says he owes his first acquaintance with Horace to you. He repeated the saying of Voltaire with regard to Hudibras, 'There are more thoughts than words.'

"If a man chooses to make a paraphrase, let him; only I would not choose to read it: for I do not think a story or a subject improved by being wire-drawn. But if he professes to make a translation, it seems to me that he should keep as close to his author as possible. He who does this, and in a pleasing manner, is the best translator.

"Your Horace gives me an exact idea of the manners of the Romans.

"I am, dear Sir,

"Your very obliged,

"CATHERINE HUTTON."

The other letter is from Southey, and thereby hangs a tale. In the spring of 1809 Charles Lloyd the younger, who had been supplied with manuscript copies of his father's translations to show to his friends the Lake poets, wrote thus from Old Brathay:—

"I have not shown these translations to my friends, for the omission of which in each particular case I have a separate reason to give. Both Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Southey profess to admire thy translation of Homer very much, and often voluntarily introduce the sub-

ject in order to express their commendations—but, as a reason for my omitting to obey thy injunction which applies equally to all three, I must inform thee that I know they have next to a contempt for Horace: and the best translations that could possibly be conceived of his verses would not, I believe, give them any pleasure. Now I will give the reason for my omission, which applies to each of these *personages* distinctly. Wordsworth is so much occupied with political subjects just now, and with a pamphlet which he has in the press on the Portuguese Convention, &c., that I am sure it would be impossible to draw his attention to any other subject—besides, even at best he is proverbially indifferent to the literary efforts of others. Coleridge is so miserable in mind and body that he pays no attention to the most urgent [of his] own affairs. It is true I did me[ntion these] translations of thine to him, and [asked him] to look at them when he had [ar-]ranged the publication of The Fri[end. But] The Friend is now as far from being arranged as it was 6 months ago. In fact he attends to nothing but *dreamy* reading and still more *dreamy* feelings. This I would not upon

any account have communicated out of the family. Southey has such an invincible dislike to Horace that I would not show a translation by Pope himself of that author to him. . . . In spite of what I have now urged, if I have a convenient opening, I will put thy translations into the hands of my friends—but poets, I fancy, ever were, and ever will be an *intractable* race.—If thou hadst any more of Homer to send me I would put that into their hands with pleasure."

The foregoing remarks apply to the manuscript versions. When printed, a copy of the Horace was, none the less, despatched to Southey by the undaunted translator; and this was Southey's diplomatic acknowledgment:—

Keswick, April 11, 1813.

"My dear Sir,—I received yesterday from Old Brathay, your Epistles of Horace, and am much obliged to you for the book. You have attempted a task of great difficulty, and you have performed it respectably everywhere, and in some parts with singular success.

"Charles writes to me in healthy spirits. I am glad to find that he has amused himself with 'Alfieri,' an occupation which I suggested to him last year. If he completes the translation (as seems likely) it will be an acquisition to our literature, and may at least be expected to repay him with credit. I hope we shall soon see him here, now that we are enjoying long evenings and fine weather.

"Believe me, my dear Sir [the signature has been cut away]."

And here, save for one other slight experiment to be mentioned later, we leave Mr. Lloyd as translator.

# XV

## CHARLES LLOYD AT OLD BRATHAY

### 1808–1815

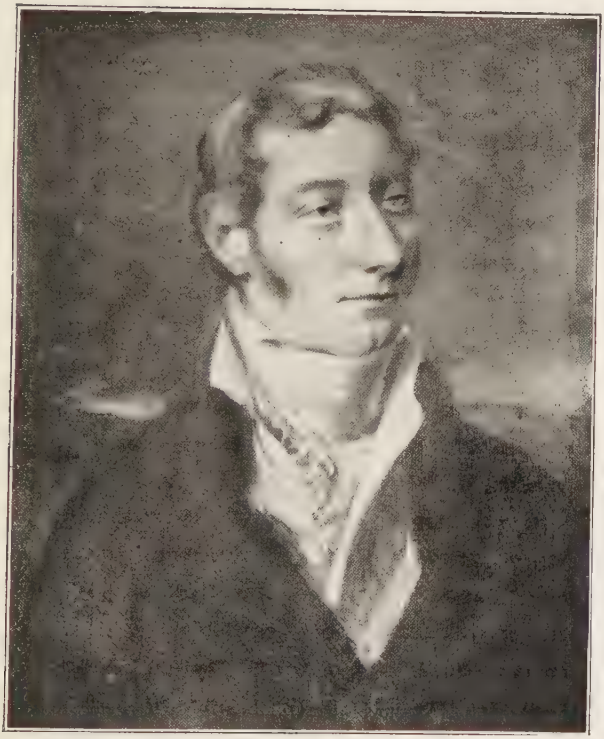
Of Charles Lloyd's life at Old Brathay the records are meagre. He spent the years in alternations of light and shadow, the light never very radiant, the shadow gloomy beyond description. As he grew older, his fits of melancholy depression became increasingly serious, and, as Dr. Garnett points out in the "Dictionary of National Biography," bore a curious likeness to those which afflicted Cowper.

But during his serene, or less troubled periods, Lloyd's conditions had little resemblance to those of the recluse of Olney. His house was noisy with children, to whom he seems to have been a loving and solicitous parent; his wife was ever at his side; members of his family continually paid him visits, and in the neighbourhood he had many friends.

Lloyd's tastes were simple. Walking, with

long pauses for the contemplation of scenery, gardening, reading, and conversation at high pressure—these were his favourite beguilements. According to De Quincey, Lloyd's house was at one time a centre of gaiety. Many dinner parties were given, at which Lloyd was an admirable host, and there were even dances, in which, though he took no part, he found much pleasure. The Old Brathay cottage numbered among its visitors the Wordsworths, the Coleridges, the Southeys, "Christopher North" and Miss Penny (afterwards his wife), Dr. Watson, the Bishop of Llandaff, Miss Watson, his daughter, with whom Charles Lloyd corresponded in French, and De Quincey.

It is to the account of Lloyd which forms a chapter in De Quincey's "Autobiography" that we are indebted for much that is known of him at this time. De Quincey, it is true, is not always to be relied upon, but we must take what we can. He wrote thus of Lloyd's appearance:—"He was tall and somewhat clumsy —not intellectual so much as benign and conciliatory in his expression of face. His features were not striking, but they expressed great goodness of heart; and latterly wore a depre-



CHARLES LLOYD (1775–1839).

By John Constable, R.A.

*From a picture in the possession of C. A. Lloyd, Esq.*

catory expression that was peculiarly touching to those who knew its cause."

Of Lloyd's conversational powers De Quincey left this record:—"It was really a delightful luxury to hear him giving free scope to his powers for investigating subtle combinations of character; for distinguishing all the shades and affinities of some presiding qualities, disentangling their intricacies, and balancing, antithetically, one combination of qualities against another. But," added the historian, "let but one person enter the room of whose sympathy he did not feel secure, and his powers forsook him as suddenly as the buoyancy of a bird that has received a mortal shot in its wing. Accordingly, it is a fact that neither Wordsworth nor Coleridge ever suspected the amount of power which was latent in Lloyd; for he firmly believed that both of them despised him. Mrs. Lloyd thought the same thing."[1]

Whether or not Coleridge and Wordsworth entertained that feeling for Lloyd cannot be said. We know at any rate that some years before

[1] Mrs. Lloyd, whom De Quincey admired and respected—she was "unsurpassed," he declared, "as wife and mother"—reminded him in appearance of Mrs. Jordan, the actress.

Coleridge had believed Lloyd to possess genius. Hypersensitive natures are apt to misconstrue, and Lloyd may have magnified into contempt the antipathy which the two poets would naturally feel for a morbid mind. Be that as it may, both men were occasionally in his society.

On the other hand the younger Coleridges would seem positively to have courted it. "I remember," wrote Hartley Coleridge among his reminiscences, "dear Charles Lloyd reading Pope's 'Translation of Statius' in the little drawing-room at Old Brathay. The room, the furniture, the little 12mo Pope, are all before me. He highly commended the following lines:—

> Yet who, before, more popularly bow'd?
> Who more propitious to the suppliant crowd?
> Patient of right, familiar in the throne,
> What wonder then? He was not then alone.

Lloyd appreciated Pope as rightly as any man I ever knew, which I ascribe partly to his intelligent enjoyment of French writers, tempered as it was with reverent admiration of the greater English." And Derwent Coleridge, in his memoir of his brother Hartley, says of their earlier life: "We were lodged at Clappersgate, a small hamlet beautifully situated at the dis-

tance of a mile from the town, this place having been selected on account of its nearness to Old Brathay, the residence of my father's literary friend Charles Lloyd. . . . His sons, four noble lads, were our schoolfellows, and their admirable mother, had we needed it, would have been a mother to us."

In Lloyd's Old Brathay letters to his brother Robert, there are interesting passages concerning Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Here is one from a letter at the end of 1808:—

"Coleridge has made us several visits lately. We are very much interested with his society—indeed I can set no bounds to my astonishment at his talents. Coleridge is talking of publishing a weekly paper which he calls *The Friend* —it is to resemble in its plan the Spectator, Guardian, &c.—The prospectus of the work is now printing at Kendal.—It is to treat of subjects moral, and in connection with taste and general literature—and indeed it is to extend to all topics except those of politics and religion. —If the work comes out he would be much obliged to you to promote its sale by procuring subscriptions for him—when the prospectus is printed I will send you some copies.

"I have translated about half of Ovid's 'Metamorphoses,' and there I remain: the appetite for this employment has not seized me lately—and if I have not an appetite to begin with I never succeed." (He did not complete the task.)

In the following January, 1809, Coleridge spent a few days with the Lloyds at Old Brathay. Fortunately Agatha Lloyd, Charles's sister, was a guest at the same time, and hence the following description in a letter to Robert's wife:—

"Coleridge has been our guest since sixth day; he intends going to Grasmere to-day. He is too interesting a man to live comfortably with a long time—he has very strong affections, but in his domestic habits I do not wonder at his being a very trying husband, unless his wife could be so entirely *absorbed* in his *mind* as not to think of the inconvenience of being put out of her way in every day occurrences, which after all make up the great sum of our lives; and I believe little inattentions of that sort are and must be felt. He is truly a wonderful man—his powers of conversation and the richness and extent of his mind are indeed extraordinary, and I only wish, by a

little more attention to *system* than to *impulse*, he were more calculated to shine as a domestic character. He has two interesting boys for whom he has a most fatherly affection. Hartley is a child to me *painfully* out of the common way both in *mind* and constitution—should he live, poor fellow, he will be a most interesting character, and I wish, as related his *parents*, he were in more happy circumstances. I have been going on without *appearing* to consider thee, but thou must excuse me. Southey was here for an hour on sixth day, and Wordsworth called; so the three northern poets were all here that day. This seems the land of genius, but I shall be very well contented to leave the *genii* of the mountains for my dear friends at home, who after all are my only *true friends*.—I feel confident of this, and wish more and more to cherish a disposition to love and be loved by my own fireside, amongst those of my own family." [1]

[1] It was Agatha Lloyd (1791–1838), the writer of this letter, who transmitted the poetical instinct of the family. By her marriage with James Pearson she had several children. Among them was Mary Caroline, who married Robert Benson Dockray. One of their daughters, Mary, married the Rev. Frederick Binyon, and became the mother of Mr. Laurence Binyon, the author of "A Book of London

On February 7, 1809, Charles wrote :—" We see nothing of Coleridge at present, in consequence of several individuals of Wordsworth's family not having had the measles ; but I received a line from him the day before yesterday, written on Saturday. Of ' The Friend' he writes as follows : ' Wordsworth and myself went to Kendal on Tuesday last to propose to Pennington (the bookseller there) the printing and publishing of ' The Friend,' stamped, &c., as a newspaper, but we could *settle* nothing.' He went to Kendal on Sunday a second time, on the same business."

The following remarks on Coleridge, called forth by the first number of ' The Friend,' are interesting. They occur in a letter from Charles to Robert, dated June 12, 1809 :—

" I shall be much obliged to you for the Beaumont and Fletcher and Massinger on the terms you mention—also for Lamb's specimens of ancient dramatic writers and Mrs. Leicester's School. We have the tales from Shakspeare. I certainly think the first number of ' The

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Visions," and " Porphyrion, and other Poems ;" another, Agatha Sophia, married the Rev. Stephen Phillips, and became the mother of Mr. Stephen Phillips, the author of " Christ in Hades," and " Poems."

Friend' abstruse and laboured in the style—it is evidently written with great difficulty. I cannot say that I am more pleased with the second. Coleridge has such a lamentable want of voluntary power. If he is excited by a remark in company, he will pour forth, in an evening, without the least apparent effort, what would furnish matter for a hundred essays—but the moment that he is to write—not from present impulse but from preordained deliberation—his powers fail him; and I believe that there are times when he could not pen the commonest notes. He is one of those minds who, except in inspired moods, can do nothing—and his inspirations are all *oral*, and not *scriptural*. And when he is inspired he surpasses, in my opinion, all that could be thought or imagined of a human being. . . . But I have more *fears* than *hopes* about this publication."

Here, from another letter, is a hint of Lloyd's taste in literature at that time:—"When my Mother comes I should be glad to have Rollin, Barrow, and Marcus Antoninus sent, also the plate of my arms, and the half-boots which are to wear with the pantaloons and the ordering of which I leave entirely to you; order for

me what you would order for yourself, only let the boots be made rather stronger than your town beaux would choose to wear. I shall also thank you to send the inhaler. Please to put these things under the care of Caroline in preference to that of my Mother, who, though quite disposed to perform an act of kindness, is most philosophically indifferent to the common affairs of life." Lloyd added, as if in proof that such indifference was not also his:—"If Hessian boots would do to wear with pantaloons, or small clothes *indiscriminately*, I should prefer them—but not without."

The rest of the letter, and one or two that followed it, dealt with "Isabel," a novel written by Charles Lloyd some years previously, and now being revised and transcribed for the benefit of Miss Watson. "There is," he wrote, "an accurate delineation of passion in it, but the story is incurably defective." "Isabel" was a piece of Rousseauism, the product of an unhealthy mind. After toying with its revision for some months the author had a few copies printed for private distribution; but almost immediately afterwards, in accordance, presumably, with the strongly-expressed views of his father,

he ordered its suppression. In the letter containing the instructions for this suppression is a passage of arms between the two brothers. Robert seems to have disapproved with some vigour of the "accurate delineation of passion"; Charles replied:—

"I cannot agree with you that 'Isabel' is a dangerous book. The proper answer to the following query of yours, 'Why should minds who feel the tyranny of love be, by any coincidence, confirmed that it can only be released from its thraldom by death?' arises from what I have said in the preface on the nature of the passions—viz., taking for granted, that even in their most perilous degree *they must exist* in some characters, it is better to provide intellectual associations for them even in this perilous degree. *An Isabel* would no more die of love than she otherwise would, because she had somewhere read in a novel of a heroine that died of Love. We are governed by the law of our own nature, and not by the law which we read of in others—and the law of another mind no further affects mine than as far as it coincides with mine—therefore if the law of my mind be death from Love, I shall die whether I read

books that inculcate the omnipotence of love or not; if the law of my mind be *not* death from Love, I shall not die tho' I read of Paphian victims from morning till night. Farewell! my dear Robert, I hope that when this arrives you will not be immersed in the '*quagmire of morbidity*.' I was very much amused by the phrase, and think that there is a considerable *Hudibrastic* felicity in it."

The year of the letter just quoted was 1811, when another season of affliction was imminent. The following passage, written to Robert a month or so after, contains a piece of searching self-revelation :—

"I often wish that I had some one entirely sympathizing friend, but this is a chimerical wish; a person to feel entire sympathy with one must have suffered as much, and, in the way that I have done, and then he would be as full of his sufferings as I am of mine, and therefore rather calculated to wish *to act upon another* than to be acted upon himself: added to this that I doubt whether, all things considered, morbid persons are edifying companions for each other. I fully believe that the secret why persons of extreme sensibility

seldom or never agree long together is, that there are few of that temperament, perhaps none, such is the constitution of the world, that do not suffer very much—and, as I said before, they rather want *to impress* than *to be impressed.* Now they cannot excite an entire sympathy except where they meet with a sensibility *equal*, and an experience *similar*, to their own ; but here in all probability, tho' the charm will be great at first, the want on both sides will be alike, *i.e.*, an impatience to *act upon* rather than *be* acted upon, and these *fine minds* will quarrel very *vulgarly.* Such is in my opinion the sketch of the history of almost all sentimental friendships, especially when they are founded on the wish, selfish at bottom, rather to pour out your own feelings than to be impressed by the feelings of others. Indeed, in almost all people of sensibility, I believe that there is an impatience and an irritation when they are long *acted upon.* What must be then their fate? Why, they must live in constant irritation, or they must sit down content with the joyless gloom of unparticipated feeling—except indeed they have religion, which seems to me the grand panacea for minds of this cast."

Only a man gifted in no common degree with introspection could have written that. Such a passage justifies Talfourd's opinion of Charles Lloyd: "His mind was chiefly remarkable for a fine power of analysis. In this power of discriminating and distinguishing, carried almost to a pitch of painfulness, Lloyd has scarcely been equalled. At a time when," Talfourd added, "like Cowper, he believed himself the especial subject of Divine wrath, he could bear his part in the most subtle disquisitions on questions of religion, morals, and poetry, with the nicest accuracy of perception and the most exemplary candour."

Among other admirers of Charles Lloyd's swift and sure vision in metaphysical questions was Shelley. During a visit to the Lakes, Shelley borrowed, through Southey, Lloyd's copy of Berkeley's works. "I remember," he wrote to Leigh Hunt in 1819, "observing some pencil notes in it, probably written by Lloyd, which I thought particularly acute. One especially struck me as being the assertion of a doctrine of which even then I had long been persuaded, and on which I had founded much of my persuasions as regarded the imagined

cause of the universe—'Mind cannot create, it can only perceive.'" Shelley refers particularly to the "Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous in opposition to Sceptics and Atheists." [1]

In October, 1811, came Robert's sudden death, a blow which fell on Charles Lloyd with grievous force. In losing this brother, he lost the one relative to whom he could unburden his mind without hesitation. Henceforward, for several years, he was in the clutch of despair, with only occasional periods of alleviation, part of which he employed in the somewhat gloomy task of translating the tragedies of Alfieri.[2] His

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[1] The book in question (the two-volume edition of 1784) is now in the possession of Mr. C. A. Lloyd.

[2] A translation of Alfieri was naturally not much to the taste of Charles Lloyd's family. No record of Mr. Lloyd's opinion has come down, but Priscilla Wordsworth, writing to Robert's wife a few days before Waterloo, thus expressed her feelings:—

"What an eventful period this is! I never felt so depressed by the outward state of things as at this moment. The external face of the world seems to me full of discouragement. Have you read W.'s "Excursion"? I hope you have. It is a noble work—and cannot, I think, be read without profit. I am sorry that I cannot either like or approve Alfieri. The stories are so atrocious, as rather to *disgust* than to excite sympathy—and the style is so inharmonious as by no means to add to its attractions. I much regret that Charles should have made choice of so unprepossessing an Author. Sir G. Beaumont—

version, in three volumes, was published in 1815, just before his condition reached its first climax of gravity.

The year 1815 brought more grief to the Lloyd family; for Charles's affliction was followed by the death of Priscilla Wordsworth, in October, at the age of only thirty-three. She left three children. Well might Lamb write to Miss Hutchinson, William Wordsworth's sister-in-law: "Poor C. Lloyd and poor Priscilla!"

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who paid us a visit a few days ago—was at Rome when Alfieri acted his own Tragedies. He spoke of them as pedantic, and uninteresting. He observed that he saw him act, on the very days on which, according to Alfieri's dates, some of his plays were written."

# XVI

## CHARLES LLOYD IN LONDON

### 1818–1823

In 1818, however, came an unmistakable renewal of intellectual clearness and activity, and with it Charles Lloyd's removal to London and his re-entry into that literary life for which he had once so longed. Mrs. Lloyd and his children did not follow him thither until later.

Our first glimpse of him is in Macready's "Reminiscences." In the spring of 1818, when Macready was playing "Rob Roy McGregor; or, Auld Lang Syne" at Covent Garden, he received one morning an unsigned letter and a sonnet, the writer of which set forth that the actor's performance as the Highlander on the previous night had caused the first gush of tears —and consequent relief of mental tension— that had come to him for years. Macready had at the time no clue to the identity of the sufferer whom he had thus been the means of assisting, but a year or so after came to him a

presentation volume of poetry, in which the sonnets figured, and he then learned that Charles Lloyd was the author.

A friendship [wrote Macready] which lasted through his life, speedily grew out of the acquaintance which this compliment induced. I was a frequent visitor at his lodgings, spending many evenings in delightful intercourse with him and his most amiable and accomplished wife. Under his roof I first became acquainted with Lamb, and that sister to whom his brotherly devotion made his life one course of self-denying heroism. She was most intelligent and gentle in manners. Here, too, took place my introduction to Talfourd, who has so eloquently told the story of their woes. It was from Lloyd himself that I received the melancholy account of his sufferings. For upwards of four years he had been afflicted with a most extraordinary malady, a torpor of feeling, and, as it were, a numbness of his faculties, that all the medical advice to which he had resorted had been unable to relax or to dispel. He was impenetrable to the efforts of skill or the blandishments of affection. All intellectual pursuits had been discontinued, and, as his sonnet intimates, life itself had become wearisome. By some inexplicable chance he strayed one night, he scarce knew why, into the pit of Covent Garden Theatre, where the drama of "Rob Roy" was being acted. He became absorbed in the interest of Scott's romantic story, and, in the scene where the outlawed chief dashes away the tears from his eyes, poor Lloyd felt his own fast trickling down his cheeks. The

rock was struck, and the gushing stream was a new spring of life to him. So he felt it, and testified to me, as the instrument of his restoration, the most affectionate regard.

Thus relieved and re-invigorated, Charles Lloyd had plunged into literary labours. From London he addressed to Hannah Lloyd, Robert's widow, in whom he found a vein of sympathy kindred to that which marked Robert as his most congenial correspondent, several letters which enable us to follow his actions and thoughts with some closeness. Here are interesting passages from a long communication, dated July 28, 1819, in which, presumably with the intention of preparing a new volume for the press, he asked for copies of certain sonnets that, from time to time, he had sent to Hannah :—

"The constant succession of artificial impressions, particularly that portion of them which is addressed to the sense of hearing, peculiar to a residence in London, produces all the effect which I anticipated. Elsewhere I felt literally alone in the world. Here I feel alone as respects individual sympathy, but on all sides a wall, a fortification of life, and human life, seems to surround and protect me. Before I

came here, it was a *phenomenon if I were employed;* and a *still greater one* if I were *interested* in that employment. Here I am always doing something, and the perpetual noise that I hear from every quarter; the perpetual, involuntary, and unsought-for *remindings* of life with which, on every side, the surrounding atmosphere is impregnated, keep up an external counterpoise to the restless agony ever busy within: and tho' I must know that, in a religious sense, I am no more protected here than I should be among the Lybian deserts, since God is ever present,

> ever felt,
> In the void waste, as in the city full,
> And *where* He vital reigns, there *must* be *joy*.[1]

yet the insensible influence of this "hum" and bustle "of man" is considerable, and, as far as

[1] From the Hymn at the end of Thomson's "Seasons":—
Should fate command me to the farthest verge
Of the green earth, to distant barbarous climes,
Rivers unknown to song; where first the sun
Gilds Indian mountains, or his setting beam
Flames on th' Atlantic isles; 'tis nought to me;
Since God is ever present, ever felt,
In the void waste, as in the city full;
And where He vital breathes, there must be joy.

it goes, operates in the most soothing, and alleviating manner. I would not surrender the mere effects of the noise of London for any consideration in life: and what is most extraordinary is, though it has had no effect towards producing the least change in my ideas, and impressions with regard to my ultimate and final destination, yet it holds such an ascendency over my *momently sensations*, that it has enabled me for the last ten weeks to change almost *uninterrupted sleeplessness at nights* for a *repose during the nocturnal hours as uninterrupted*. . . .

"I have seen a number of literary characters, with whom I was not previously acquainted, since I came here. Mr. Hazlitt, Mr. Hunt, Mr. Procter [1] (who has published a most beautiful and exquisite collection of poems called

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[1] Barry Cornwall wrote, in his memoir of Lamb:—

"The last time I saw Charles Lloyd was in company with Hazlitt. We heard that he had taken lodgings at a working brazier's shop, in Fetter Lane, and we visited him there and found him in bed, much depressed, but very willing to discuss certain problems with Hazlitt, who carried on the greater part of the conversation. We understood that he had selected these noisy apartments in order that they might distract his mind from the fears and melancholy thoughts which at that time distressed him."

Dramatic Sketches under the feigned name of Barry Cornwall—get the book if you can—it is a small volume, and not expensive), Mr. Godwin, Miss Joanna Baillie (the authoress of the plays on the passions), Mrs. Barbauld, and Miss Aikin, &c., &c. I might be in society every day if I liked, and have often been engaged to two places the same evening, and have received three or four invitations for the same day; yet for one invitation that I accept, I decline half a dozen. This keeps me in motion, and, if I am not employed in visiting, at least my attention is forced out of myself by the calls, or the notes which I am obliged to write and often receive, from those who seem disposed to notice me. I have written several poems since I have been here—an effort which it never came into my thought to make in any situation in which I have been for the last four years."

In 1819 appeared "Nugæ Canoræ," a volume of poems containing certain new pieces, and most of Lloyd's early work with Coleridge and Lamb reprinted. The book, which was dedicated to Sophia Lloyd, reflected an affectionate and foreboding temperament. It was

not remarkable, yet was well reviewed, notably by "Christopher North," in "Blackwood." Thirty years later, however, in 1849, in a review of Serjeant Talfourd's "Final Memorials of Charles Lamb," a writer in "Maga" undid Christopher's praise with merciless directness. In the British Museum is Coleridge's copy of "Nugæ Canoræ," distinguished by a few penciled marginalia. These neither display the critic in too favourable a light, nor add, as do so many of his comments, to the book's value.[1]

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[1] Thus when Lloyd wrote:—

"Oh, Liberty,
I ask for thee alone;—with thee to weave
Quaint rhymes, to breath the air, were heaven to me;
To dream myself the only living thing, save Thee!"

Coleridge added in pencil:—

"To think myself the only Being alive,
*Remorse.*"

And when in the Advertisement to the Translations from Ovid, Lloyd said that he had adopted "smooth versification," Coleridge marked the word "smooth," and appended the note: "Verily, rather too good a joke!" Coleridge, however, was not entirely without appreciation for the work. A stanza in one poem began with the line:—

"When first, I say—I've played the truant long."

Coleridge remarked (the italics are added):—"These are not lyrical transitions, but the mere orange-sucking of bewildered garrulity—really vexatious in a poem of *so much merit.*"

In December, 1819, writing to Hannah Lloyd from rooms in Fleet Street, Lloyd foreshadowed his next book, "Desultory Thoughts in London":—"My friend Manning has been with me since last Friday, and I expect stays till the next—the 31st. But whether he be here or not there is a spare bed for James [Lloyd]. I am much more comfortable than I was at Birmingham; but *that* I entirely attribute to the greater variety of external impressions made upon me. At times still I suffer a great deal: tho' much less than I did. I have written a poem of between three and four thousand lines called 'London': it embraces every topic of reflection which such a place may be supposed to suggest to a contemplative man."

So far Lloyd had been alone; but early in 1820, Sophia and some or all of the children joined him, and they took a furnished house at Kensington. He wrote thus to Hannah:—"I have another volume of poems ready for the press—a bookseller has offered to print it at his own risk, and to share the profits with me. I have also a tale in five volumes, for which I have been offered £20 per vol. At all events, I hope to be able to avail myself of such an

opportunity of near neighbourhood of publishers as I may never have again, to try, if health be afforded me, to form some respectable connection in that way, which may afford a prospect of sale to, and profit from, my future literary labours." The novel alluded to was never published, possibly never finished.

Lamb's name occurred in Macready's reference to Lloyd. In a letter to Barron Field, dated August 16, 1820,[1] we find Lamb mentioning Lloyd: "We received your 'Australian First Fruits,' of which I shall say nothing here, but refer you to * * * * [? Hunt] of the 'Examiner,' who speaks our mind on all public subjects. I can only assure you that both Coleridge and Wordsworth, and also C. Lloyd, who has lately reappeared in the poetical horizon, were hugely taken with your Kangaroo." "Australian First Fruits" was the poetical volume by Barron Field which Lamb reviewed in the "Examiner" with so light a touch, "The Kangaroo" being the title of the second poem.

In 1820 intense excitement was caused by the determination of Caroline, George the

[1] Printed in "The Lambs" by Mr. W. C. Hazlitt.

Fourth's consort, to be recognised as Queen. Here is a spirited account of Lloyd's feelings in the matter :—

"I hope that you, like ourselves, are hearty in the Queen's cause. In my opinion, as an affair of Justice, it matters not whether she be innocent or guilty. Who ever heard that there was a sex in crime? It is infamous for such a man as our king to throw the first stone in such a business, and as infamous in the nobles of the Land, under an hypocritical pretence of regard for the religion and morals of the country, to be the tools of his malice and hatred.— If she be judged guilty, it is not because she is *frail*, but because the king hates her. Were power in *her* hands, these very men that now sit in judgment upon her, even if she were as bad as Catherine of Russia, would be at her feet. Where is all that 'proud obedience to rank and sex' of which Burke boasted so much, gone?—I blush for Englishmen."

In 1821 the "Desultory Thoughts in London," Lloyd's best work, from which quotations have already been made, was issued. This, again, was dedicated to his wife Sophia. One more passage may be added to those given earlier

in this volume ; four stanzas which show us the point which Lloyd's own development had reached. The influence of Wordsworth is very perceptible.

Give me the man who, for thy sake alone—
  Not for his *hortus siccus ;* cabinet
Of fossil, spar, shell, coral, mineral, stone ;
  Or for his pencil's sake, doth contemplate
Thee, Nature ! Give the man who oft has known
  Himself, when he saw thee, self to forget ;
And in a depth of ravishment transfused,
On thee, with silent meditation, mused !

And let this meditation heightened be,
  Religion ! by thy flame, to adoration !
And then for things of earth what careth he ?
  For what distress hath he not consolation ?
He who in Solitude his God can see
  Mid Nature's loftiest scenes, has found salvation.
From all the petty miseries of life ;
A balm has gain'd for prejudice and strife.
. . . . . .
A tree, a cottage, or a child at play,
  And where the earth is destitute, the sky,
Fantastic clouds, when on them the sun's ray
  Confers e'en supernatural imagery !
The speechless lustre of the new-born day !
  The solemn pageant when night broods on high !
In these, and thousand more such forms as these,
His moisten'd eye, his Maker's goodness sees !

In the same year, 1821, came "Personal Essays on the Character of Pope as a Poet and Moralist, and on the Language and Objects most fit for Poetry," a rather tedious piece of argument in ten-syllabled couplets, dedicated to the author's father. Then, in 1822, "The Duke d'Ormond," a tragedy written many years earlier, was published; and, in 1823, "Poems." These "Poems," which were introduced by a quotation from Byron—

> Sorrow is knowledge: they who know the most
> Must mourn the deepest o'er the fatal truth,
> The tree of knowledge is not that of life—

included some interesting but abstruse stanzas "on the difficulty with which, in youth, we bring home to our habitual consciousness the idea of death." At the beginning of this piece Lloyd had placed a passage from Elia's essay on "New Year's Eve" in a recent "London Magazine." On receiving a copy of the book, Lamb wrote ("Letters" ii. 79) with heroic kindness:—

"Your lines are not to be understood reading on one leg. They are sinuous, and to be won with wrestling. I do assure you in sin-

cerity that nothing you have done has given me greater satisfaction. Your obscurity, where you are dark, which is seldom, is that of too much meaning, not the painful obscurity which no toil of the reader can dissipate; not the dead vacuum and floundering place in which imagination finds no footing: it is not the dimness of positive darkness, but of distance; and he that reads and not discerns must get a better pair of spectacles. I admire every piece in the collection. I cannot say the first is best: when I do so, the last read rises up in judgment. To your Mother, to your Sister, to Mary dead, they are all weighty with thought and tender with sentiment. Your poetry is like no other. Those cursed dryads and pagan trumperies of modern verse have put me out of conceit of the very name of poetry. Your verses are as good and as wholesome as prose, and I have made a sad blunder if I do not leave you with an impression that your present is rarely valued." From the poem written on the death of Mary Lloyd, Charles Lloyd's mother, an extract has already been made (page 20).

With the volume of 1823 Lloyd's literary career ended. The shadows then closed around

him again and he moved with his family to France, where he died near Versailles, on January 16, 1839, a month before his sixty-fourth birthday. He thus outlived by a few years Coleridge and Lamb, who both passed away in 1834.

Among the papers is a long account of Charles Lloyd's children written by Sophia Lloyd, their mother, at some time probably in the first decade of the century. This chapter may well conclude with extracts from these loving notes :—

"I expect few more delightful recollections than those connected with the infancy and childhood of my children, and to perpetuate these I have often thought I would make memoranda of those almost nameless circumstances, which nevertheless are of daily recurrence, and nearly as frequently the occasion of interesting remark, from children who have been *encouraged* but not *taught* to think. This resolution I at length begin to execute after having read with them the first Chapter of Genesis this morning. I can be tolerably accurate in what is so recent, and must afterwards

SOPHIA LLOYD AND CHILD (SOPHIA).

By John Constable, R.A.

*From an unfinished picture in the possession of C. A. Lloyd, Esq.*

endeavour to recall what has most impressed me on other occasions. At the 3rd verse, 'God said, Let there be light, &c.,' I remarked that whatever God thought proper to be done, would take place, if He gave only an order for it to be so. Gros^r. [Charles Grosvenor, born 1800] replied: 'I should think that the light would not have come at His speaking if He had not made it beside.'—At the 7th verse, 'And God made the firmament and divided the waters from the waters,' Gros^r. said: 'It seems as if God did not make the world, but only altered it.' At the 20th verse, 'And God said, Let us make man,' James [James Farmer, born 1801] said: 'Why then, there must be more than one God, or else why does it say let us?' 31st verse: 'And God saw everything that He had made, &c.'—Gros^r. and James: 'How much faster God can work than we can; now if we want to make a tree, we must set a stone or an acorn, or something, and then it gets a little bigger, and a little bigger, and still perhaps when we are even quite men, any body would think it was but just a young tree. I cannot think how God could do so much; He *must* have been very tired, though to be sure it

was *God*, and that is different from us.' Gros^r.: 'Mama, was it you? some one told me that God was not any shape—but *I* think He must be all shapes; however, He must if He is everywhere. Now suppose I dig a round hole, if God is there, He must be round; and if there was a very long place, and He was all about there, then He must be long—I cannot think how it is.'

"I have had very little opportunity for observing other children free of that restraint which the consciousness of observation necessarily occasions, and of course there is then nothing natural or spontaneous in their remarks. Hence I often ask myself whether all infant minds dwell apparently with peculiar interest on serious or even religious subjects? I am pursuaded that it would be easy to render such subjects more than any other interesting to them—that which cannot be fully explained excites perpetual curiosity, and the constant necessity one finds of illustration by the analogies of ordinary and infinitely inferior concerns, keeps up in the mind of children a constant idea of the comparative dignity of the Deity and his operations. I think too that children

who do not associate promiscuously with others, provided there be a family large enough for companionship, are in a situation most favourable to simplicity of character, and habits of reflection—or rather, upon reconsidering this opinion, such children are in circumstances most favourable for receiving any impression which their parents may wish to make upon them, and this simplicity of character, this habit of reflection, are the points at which I have aimed; but certainly this comparative solitude is more likely to produce great men, than great scholars. I find that my children are what is called more backward than most others, that is, they would be longer in reading you a given quantity, but every sentence would suggest to them some inquiry.

"*23rd May.*—To-day James asked me if we were to be very wicked in this world, whether God would make us suffer more than Jesus did when He was crucified?

"*James:* 'Mama, would it not be as easy for God to stop us just before we do wrong things, as to punish us for them afterwards?'

"*Grosr.:* 'Mama, it seems very wonderful that God was never made, and yet it would be

quite as wonderful if He was made, because somebody else must have made those that made God, and so still we could not have told how the first was made.'

"*Owen* [born 1803]: 'Could God kill Himself? If He was to try, how do you think He would do it?'

"*Gros^r.:* 'Perhaps He'd take the flaming sword that drove Adam and Eve out of Paradise.'

"*Gros^r.:* 'Mama, does *world without end* mean that because the world is round there is no end to it?'

"Going to church one very wet Sunday, Grosvenor said: 'Suppose nobody should be there beside ourselves, then, I suppose, the parson will go away.'

"I answered, 'No, if there are *three* people there, I believe he would be obliged to read the prayers.'

"*Owen:* 'I suppose that is because there are three persons in the God-head.'

"*Gros^r.:* 'Who I wonder lighted the first fire?'

"*James:* I suppose it was lighted at the sun.'

"*Gros^r:* 'No, that could not be, because

then there must have been that kind of Glass which Mama told us of, and Glass cannot be made without fire.'

"I remarked one cold morning, 'How thankful you should be who have fire and clothing this cold weather. Many poor children have not either.'

"*James:* 'Well, then, Adam and Eve did some good, for if they had never been naughty we should have been as badly off.'

"'If God does not love wicked people, and He can do everything, why does He not make everybody good?'

"'Does God live in the *ceiling* of the Garden?'

"'Is there a Prince of Wales now? I thought there never had been but one.' 'And who was that?' 'Jonah.'

"'Look, James, at those beautiful clouds! they are almost like Gold.' A few minutes after: 'Why, all those beautiful clouds are gone! I suppose God has taken them to make rainbows of. . . .'

"*Gos*r.: 'What a great many things this sunshine will make glad! It makes us very glad, Mama, because you can take us this nice

walk, and the birds will be glad because it will make the ground soft for them to find worms, and it will make the cows glad because all the snow will go off the grass, so almost everything will be glad.' During this walk we saw many trees that seemed to have, as it were, a foliage of ice. Gros^r. said, 'Mama, how beautiful it looks,' and ran on, but soon returning he said, 'Do you think this would do for a tale about it, "Upon the branches of the trees, the falling drops do freeze"?' Just afterwards we observed a hawthorn covered with moss. Gros^r. said: 'I don't know whether that is more beautiful even in summer than it is in winter, "the hawthorn tree where moss doth grow, the hawthorn tree where flowers do blow."' I shall very long remember this walk: we gathered moss and lichens, cracked the ice upon every runner that crossed our way, knocked off the icicles that loaded every weed or plant which grew within reach, and spent four hours in walking as many miles, seldom in silence, and, I believe, when we reached home, that each of us thought the morning had been well spent.

"I had long promised the children that I would ask D. W. [Dorothy Wordsworth] to

spend a week with them, and on the —— of April I went to Grasmere for her; on my return, as I entered, I passed all the children, who, seeing me with a small bundle of D's. clothes in my hand, cried out: 'Oh, she's come, she's come!' and away they ran without staying to see even if they were guessing right; in a minute or two they all came back with a flower, the treasured produce of their own gardens; this gave me a pleasure which one naturally feels in any involuntary proof of disinterested kindness. But the day before I heard them comparing the beauty and size of their flowers, and how long they would probably live, &c. I knew they had watched them day after day, and thought 'they never would be flowers.' But poor little Eddy [Edward, born 1804] had watched in vain! When his brothers gave Dora their full blown polyanthus, he had only a just budding primrose to offer. He joined in with the circle which they formed round her, and with them thrust forward his hand, but turned away his head, looking as tho' he could not bear to withhold what he, notwithstanding, was ashamed to give. The recollection brings tears into my eyes, as the sight did into James's,

who, when he saw Edward's confusion, said: 'It's the best Eddy's got, Dorothy, he's such a little boy.' And Owen, tho' it stript his border of its only beauty, fetched a polyanthus saying, 'Well, Eddy may give mine, and that's a very fine one.'"[1]

[1] It might be added that Grosvenor died in 1840, James in 1881, Owen in 1838, and Edward in 1865. The other children were Arthur, Mary, Sophia, Priscilla, Agatha and Louisa.

# XVII

## MR. LLOYD'S LATER YEARS

### 1817–1828

Mr. Lloyd grew old with the deliberation and serenity of which Quakers hold the secret. Although he reached a great age his powers never deserted him. In his business, in public affairs both national and local, in his farm at Olton Green, and in his books, his mind found that continuous yet changeful occupation which is its best preservative.

Among the miscellaneous letters in our bundle is one from William Wordsworth to Mr. Lloyd, the publication of which is commanded by the Spirit of Mischief. Herein we find the poet of primitive simplicity (who some years later was to write the "Proud were ye, Mountains," sonnet, suggested by the projected Kendal and Windermere line), asking Mr. Lloyd's advice concerning the best railway company in which to invest five hundred pounds. This is the sonnet:—

Proud were ye, Mountains, when, in times of old,
Your patriot sons, to stem invasive war,
Intrenched your brows; ye gloried in each scar:
Now, for your shame, a Power, the Thirst of Gold.
That rules o'er Britain like a baneful star,
Wills that your peace, your beauty, shall be sold,
And clearway made for her triumphal car
Through the beloved retreats your arms enfold!
Heard ye that Whistle? As her long-linked Train
Swept onwards, did the vision cross your view?
Yes, ye were startled;—and, in balance true,
Weighing the mischief with the promised gain,
Mountains, and Vales, and Floods, I call on you
To share the passion of a just disdain.

This is the letter:—

"My dear Sir,—You will be surprised with the matter which this letter will turn upon—viz., something like money business, and I feel that I ought not to approach you, without previously resting my apology on your known friendly disposition. To come to the point at once, I have been led to consider Birmingham as the point from which the railway companies now forming receive their principal impulse, and I feel disposed to risk a sum—not more than 500*l.*—in purchasing Shares in some promising

Company or Companies. I do not wish to involve you in the responsibility of *advising* an Investment of this kind, but I hope I do not presume too much when I request that you would have the kindness to point out to me, what Companies are thought the most eligible, adding directions as to the mode of proceeding in case I determine upon purchasing.

"We heard from Dr. Wordsworth about 3 weeks ago; as he does not mention Owen, we infer that his health is improved. He speaks of his Son John being much benefited by Horse exercise. I hope you receive good tidings from France. We are all very well here, and with our united best regards to you and your numerous Family, believe me to be, dear Sir, very sincerely yours,

"WM. WORDSWORTH.[1]

"Rydal Mount, January 6, 1825."

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[1] This letter lends point to the late J. K. Stephen's diverting parody of Wordsworth in "Lapsus Calami." "Poetic Lamentation"—such is the title—"on the Insufficiency of Steam Locomotion in the Lake District":—

Bright Summer spreads his various hue
O'er nestling vales and mountains steep,
Glad birds are singing in the blue,
In joyous chorus bleat the sheep.

Dr. Wordsworth was Christopher, the poet's brother, and Mr. Lloyd's son-in-law. The passage concerning news from France refers to Charles Lloyd, then living in that country.

Southey also was among Mr. Lloyd's correspondents, with reference to a history of the Society of Friends, which he contemplated but unfortunately did not write. He found Mr. Lloyd's knowledge of great assistance in his

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But men are walking to and fro,
  Are riding, driving, far and near,
And nobody as yet can go
  By train to Buttermere.

. . . . . .

Wake, England, wake! 'tis now the hour
  To sweep away this black disgrace—
The want of locomotive power
  In so enjoyable a place.
Nature has done her part, and why
  Is mightier man in his to fail?
I want to hear the porters cry
  "Change here for Ennerdale!"

. . . . . .

Presumptuous nature, do not rate
  Unduly high thy humble lot,
Nor vainly strive to emulate
  The fame of Stephenson and Watt.
The beauties which thy lavish pride
  Has scattered through the smiling land
Are little worth till sanctified
  By man's completing hand.

preliminary studies. The following is the most interesting of Southey's letters on this subject:—

"Keswick, Nov. 25, 1820.

"My dear Sir,—I have just received your parcel of books, with your letter of the 20th. I received also G. Whitehead's Journal and the epistles of the Yearly Meeting. For these favours I am much obliged, and not less so for the friendly solicitude which you express, lest I should write erroneously or unadvisedly, and thereby give offence.

"I am not so ignorant of mankind, or so inexperienced in the world as to suppose it possible that such a work can be written without offending some of the Society to whom it relates, unless it were composed with the direct object of pleasing them. But I am sure that no just and even-minded member of the Society ought to be offended with what I shall write, no person who will allow to me the same freedom of opinion (always exercised within the limits of charity) which he claims for himself. The errors of the early Quakers were those of their age, their virtues were their own. I will do the amplest justice to their virtues,

but I shall neither conceal their faults nor those of their opponents and persecutors. If I did, the lesson of charity, which the book is designed to enforce, would be weakened and incompleat. These things are matter of history. The life of George Fox must be written as that of Luther, of Calvin, and of our own Cranmer, without setting down anything in malice, or withholding anything in favour. After all subtractions that may be made, he, like them, will remain a good, an eminent, an influential man—a great and chosen agent in the moral and religious world. The members of the Church Establishment will not be offended when I shall speak of the severity which was exercised against the Quakers in the strongest terms of condemnation. The members of your Society will have as little reason to be offended, because I do not dissemble the provocation which their predecessors gave. Perhaps no person understands the temper of those times better than myself, because no person has studied their history more.

"With regard to facts then, my intention is and must be to compose a full and faithful history, and that history could not be faithful

unless it were full. With regard to the manner of relating them, I can only say that there will be no intention to offend, and that I verily believe no person will be offended whom I could possibly be desirous of pleasing.

"Touching the tenets and discipline of the Society, tho' I am under no apprehension of committing any material error (seeing how ample the materials are from which the account must be derived) I repeat that it will give me great pleasure to submit the chapters which relate to them to your perusal before they are printed.

"Farewell, my dear Sir, and believe me,

"Yours, with sincere respect,

"Robert Southey."

Mr. Lloyd knew of an influence for sweetness and alertness better even than these multitudinous interests; and that was the constant companionship of young people. He delighted to sun himself in his grandchildren's society, to devise amusements for them, to hear their adventures, and to tell them his own. And so fruitful were the Lloyds that it was a joy easily gratified.

Mr. Lloyd had the pleasant habit of addressing from time to time to certain of his grandchildren long rhyming letters filled with family news and kindly counsel. Among those that have been handed down, one dated September 10, 1817, a few days before his seventieth birthday, is interesting for the tale of grandchildren which it presents. Thus :—

Mary, your Aunt, has children five,
Who all I hope will prove
A comfort to their Parents dear,
And join the general love.
Anna, your Aunt, has also five,
All very fond of play.
All these I know would much enjoy,
With you a holiday ;
And I should very much delight
Could you with them be seen,
Running about the pleasant lane
Which is at Olton Green,
Your cousins also from the Lakes
Three boys, four girls, would be
With Grosvenor in addition too
Such pretty company :
Your uncle Plumstead's children five
Should also be invited,
And your Aunt Susan's children three
I think would be delighted

To join the party in the lane,
  Where blackberries abound,
And where in hedges round the field,
  In plenty nuts are found.
The nurse might carry in her arms
  Aunt Agatha's great treasure,
And then the sight of such a group
  Would give me heartfelt pleasure:
For if you all were there, I think
  If rightly I can count,
My very dear Grandchildren would
  To forty-one amount.[1]

In 1821, when Mrs. Lloyd, who long had been in ill-health, passed away, the number of grandchildren had been increased to forty-seven. Had all lived the total would have been ten more.

In another of Mr. Lloyd's familiar epistles, written in 1823, a few of these grandchildren were described more particularly. Thus, in the account of a holiday party:—

[1] Mary, who is the first mentioned in this list, became the wife of George Braithwaite; and Anna, of Isaac Braithwaite. The cousins from the Lakes were the children of Charles and Sophia Lloyd. Plumstead Lloyd married Frances Batenson. Susan was Susanna Whitehead, the widow of Thomas Lloyd. Agatha was the wife of James Pearson. The two families unrepresented were those of Robert and James, to whom the verses were inscribed.

My Grandson John Wordsworth attempted
A prize golden medal to gain,
He wrote a long poem in rhyme,
But alas his attempt proved in vain!
The subject, the death of Jane Grey
On which he dilated with spirit,
And tho' he obtained not the prize,
His verses have very much merit.
Fanny looks fresh as a rose,
But is too fond of curling her hair,
I wish her to dress very neat,
But as simple, as now she is fair;
But alas, all my Granddaughters seem
Too much to launch out in their dress,
And the more they do this (may I say
Without hurting) they please me the less,
For neatness, and simple attire,
Enliven the feminine graces,
And give a most exquisite charm,
To young and to innocent faces.
Grosvenor reads a few verses in Greek,
Every morning, when breakfast is done,
But I cannot prevail on him yet,
Nor on Fanny, to rise with the Sun,
And Emma is fond of her bed,
And I think would be apt to rise late,
But she knows very well that she must
Be ready for breakfast at eight.

Fanny and Emma, who liked folding of the hands to sleep, were the daughters of James

Lloyd. We have another glimpse of Fanny in the admirable stanza from an amusing description of his cousins written by Owen Lloyd:—

> But Fanny owns but Nature's laws:
> Concealment's surely sin!
> And so she told her love because
> She could not keep it in.

Grosvenor was the eldest son of Charles Lloyd. John Wordsworth, who was eighteen at the time of this poem, subsequently distinguished himself at Cambridge, and seemed about to fulfil his promise of brilliant scholarship with an edition of "Æschylus," when he died at the early age of thirty-four. It may here be mentioned that Charles Wordsworth, John's brother, who was then eighteen, spent part of the following Christmas holidays, 1823–24, in composing a poetical letter, in English and Latin, to his grandfather. The introduction, which is the English portion, began thus:—

> My dear Grandfather, tho' I've nought to tell,
> And all that nought I fear told o'er and o'er,
> You'll see by this sheet that, remembering well
> My former third reception, I've once more

Ventured in Pindus Street to ring the bell,
And Prœbus civilly hath oped the door:
Forthwith I've sent my card up to inquire
For a short interview with Miss Thalia.

I fancy now I see you by the fire
Sitting in your own dressing-room; a cousin
Or two perhaps attending on their sire,
Or as 'tis Christmas time, say half a dozen:—
Your guest, too, near the door, whom I desire
Kindly to be remembered to, is dozing
Just now, perhaps, with head from out his nook, who
Sings hourly—like a veritable cuckoo.

The door now opens; my epistle enters;
The seal is broken; on my wretched lay
All the attention of the party centres:—
"Who is it from?" the cousins whisper, "hey?—
From Cousin Charles? I wonder if he's sent us
Another verse epistle. I dare say,
'Tis precious stuff." Amazed you eye the stanzas,
And fear my case is worse than Sancho Panza's.

The Latin followed. The whole poem is printed in the late Bishop of St. Andrews' "Annals of my Early Life," where may be found also Mr. Lloyd's translation, made in his seventy-seventh year, of the Latin poem with which this grandson gained the prize at Harrow in 1825. The Bishop had pleasant

memories of his grandfather sitting of an evening with a long clay pipe.

Of the future Bishop of St. Andrews, and his brother, Priscilla Wordsworth, writing in 1815, a few weeks before her death, had said:—

"With regard to reading, we pursue exactly an opposite method with Charles, to that which we did with John—in endeavouring to tempt him to read, by putting in his hands the most attractive books; adapted to his years and capacity—but as yet we have not been able to give him a taste for his book. He is remarkably backward, and will never, I fear, have any taste for learning. John has read all the usual routine of books for children, Miss Edgeworth, &c. &c., but they never have seemed any food for his mind. He reads thro' a volume at a sitting, so that it would be in vain to attempt furnishing him with small books. He is just now extremely wrapped up in Shakspear's historical plays, which, together with a collection of voyages which his Father has lent him, employ all his leisure time."

The prophecy concerning Charles—"he will never have any taste for learning"—was strangely falsified; for, although sufficiently

"keen" on athletics to play, in 1827, in the first Inter-University cricket match—he made 8 in the only innings Cambridge had, and took (left-hand, with a 'twist from the off') seven of Oxford's wickets for 25 runs—and to row in the first Inter-University boat-race, he became subsequently the tutor of Mr. Gladstone, and one of the revisers of the New Testament.

Another of the grandsons, Owen Lloyd, Charles Lloyd's third son, also engaged in verse for his grandfather's entertainment. His ballad of "The Stranger at Bingley" holds an agreeable character-sketch of the old man:

Here seated in his elbow chair,
  On good terms with the fire,
A man there sat whom none that saw
  Could see but to admire.

. . . . . .

And frequent still the smile serene
  On his calm visage play'd,
Which, mirror of his soul, his soul's
  Benevolence display'd.

. . . . . .

Youth lov'd his age, he lov'd their cares,
  And while their joys he view'd
He seem'd like Jason's sire to have
  His youth again renew'd.

From another of Owen Lloyd's family-pieces quotation may be made: a long and innocently Bacchanalian letter in rhyme, despatched from Cambridge, with a present of Trinity Audit ale, to his grandfather, as a propitiation. The first part of the letter describes the young diplomatist's mock grief at being in Bingley's bad books; the rest of it shows the success of his ruse. Thus:—

First William will the bottles hear
In th' hamper make a racket,
And then will tell my Grandfather,
"Sir, here's of wine a packet."
"Come, Libby," dear grandfather'll say,
"Come let us go and see,
I never wrote to Friend Beaufoy,
For Wine: what can it be?
A cheese from James? The carriage has
Cost more than such a curd's worth.
From Cambridge 'tis. Ah now I see,
It comes from my son Wordsworth."
But while the hamper he unpacks,
A note he'll lay his hands on,
And read "Dear Grandfather, I hope
You'll find it good—Your Grandson."
He'll smile and say, "I never thought,
Owen was really bad.
Do what he would I ne'er could help
Somehow to love the lad."

"Why that's exactly as I feel,"
Sweet smiling Lib will say.
"That ne'er in this sad world may be
A worse, is all I pray."
"That's right, my dear, I like to see
Thee speak up for thy cousin."
"Yes, Grandpapa, and I am sure there's not
Like him another dozen."

Later Libby speaks again :—

"Of cousin Owen always I
Both did and shall approve,
And (is there any harm, Grandpa,
To love men cousins ?) love."

And the verses end :—

Ale is the liquor then to pour
To pouting friends libation,
For as I said before, it soon
Brings reconciliation.

Owen Lloyd became incumbent of Langdale and died there in 1841, in his forty-ninth year. Wordsworth's tender lines on this beloved pastor—"Lile Owey," as his parishioners called him—are well-known :—

By playful smiles, alas too oft,
A sad heart's sunshine, by a soft

And gentle nature, and a free
Yet modest hand of charity,
Through life was Owen Lloyd endeared
To young and old; and how revered
Had been that pious spirit a tide
Of humble mourners testified.

Owen Lloyd and Hartley Coleridge were also firm friends. When Owen Lloyd died this was the beautiful epitaph that Hartley wrote for him:—

Could love devout, or longing sighs, or tears,
From God obtain a grant of lengthened years,
Then wandering reader, thou had'st never stood
Beside the grave of one so young and good.
Still in the small, but consecrated place
He spake of judgment and he spake of grace;
Of judgment dread, and merciful delay:
And latest spake of that, the latest day,
When those—how few—that may compare with him,
Shall mount on high with brightest seraphim!

It is good to think that that perfect trust in each other, and mutual understanding, which were never to be possible between Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Charles Lloyd should have subsisted between their sons.

This passage, from another of Mr. Lloyd's rhyming letters, written at Malvern on October 15, 1825, proves his activity in his old age:—

I took my Grand-daughters
  This morning a ramble
But up the steep hills
  They could not well scramble.
So 76 years
  Might at this time be seen
More able to climb
  Than blooming eighteen.

And here, from the next of the series, written five days later, is further testimony to the Lloyds' determination to multiply:—

I have with Grandchildren been blest;
  A numerous race indeed!
Already if I count them o'er,
  They do threescore exceed;
Of some of these, I have alas!
  By illness been bereft,
But still to crowning closing years
  Full fifty now are left;
Of these the eldest has attained
  The age of twenty-five,
The youngest in the world has been
  Not yet two months alive.

An old man thus hedged about by descendants cannot be called other than happy in his declining days.

Mr. Lloyd died on January 11, 1828, in his eightieth year.

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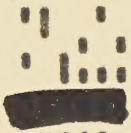

LUCAS, E V
CHARLES LAMB & THE LLOYDS

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REMAIN IN POCKET AT ALL
TIMES. A FEE WILL BE
CHARGED IF BADGE IS LOST.